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ENGLISH,

PAST AND PRESENT.

FIVE LECTURES.

BY

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

A SERIES of four lectures which I delivered last spring to the pupils of King's College School, London, supplied the foundation to this present volume. These lectures, which I was obliged to prepare in haste, on a brief invitation, and under the pressure of other engagements, being subsequently enlarged and recast, were delivered in the autumn somewhat more nearly in their present shape to the pupils of the Training School, Winchester; with only those alterations, omissions and additions, which the difference in my hearers suggested as necessary or desirable. I have found it convenient to keep the lectures, as regards the persons presumed to be addressed, in that earlier form which I had sketched out at the first; and, inasmuch as it helps much to keep lectures vivid and real that one should have some well defined audience, if not actually before one, yet before the mind's eye, to suppose myself throughout addressing my first hearers. I have supposed myself, that is, addressing a body of young Englishmen, all with a fair amount of classical knowledge (in my explanations I have sometimes had others with less than theirs in my eye),

not wholly unacquainted with modern languages; but not yet with any special designation as to their future work; having only as yet marked out to them the duty in general of living lives worthy of those who have England for their native country, and English for their native tongue. To lead such through a more intimate knowledge of this into a greater love of that, has been a principal aim which I have set before myself throughout.

In a few places I have been obliged again to go over ground which I had before gone over in a little book, "*On the Study of Words*;" but I believe that I have never merely repeated myself, nor given to the readers of my former work and now of this any right to complain that I am compelling them to travel a second time by the same paths. At least it has been my endeavour, whenever I have found myself at points where the two books come necessarily into contact, that what was treated with any fulness before, should be here touched on more lightly; and only what there was slightly handled, should here be entered on at large.

ITCHENSTOKE, *Feb.* 7, 1855.

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ENGLISH,

PAST AND PRESENT.

LECTURE I.

ENGLISH A COMPOSITE LANGUAGE.

"A VERY slight acquaintance with the history of our own language will teach us that the speech of Chaucer's age is not the speech of Skelton's, that there is a great difference between the language under Elizabeth and that under Charles the First, between that under Charles the First and Charles the Second, between that under Charles the Second and Queen Anne; that considerable changes had taken place between the beginning and the middle of the last century, and that Johnson and Fielding did not write altogether as we do now. For in the course of a nation's progress new ideas are evermore mounting above the horizon, while others are lost sight of and sink below it: others again change their form and aspect: others which seemed united, split into parts. And as it is with ideas, so it is with their symbols, words. New ones are perpetually coined to meet the demand of an advanced understanding, of new feelings that have sprung out of

the decay of old ones, of ideas that have shot forth from the summit of the tree of our knowledge; old words meanwhile fall into disuse and become obsolete; others have their meaning narrowed and defined; synonyms diverge from each other and their property is parted between them; nay, whole classes of words will now and then be thrown overboard, as new feelings or perceptions of analogy gain ground. A history of the language in which all these vicissitudes should be pointed out, in which the introduction of every new word should be noted, so far as it is possible—and much may be done in this way by laborious and diligent and judicious research—in which such words as have become obsolete should be followed down to their final extinction, in which all the most remarkable words should be traced through their successive phases of meaning, and in which moreover the causes and occasions of these changes should be explained, such a work would not only abound in entertainment, but would throw more light on the development of the human mind than all the brainspun systems of metaphysics that ever were written."

These words, which thus far are not my own, but the words of a greatly honoured friend and teacher, who, though we behold him now no more, still teaches, and will teach, by the wisdom of his writings, and the nobleness of his life (they are words of Archdeacon Hare's), I have put in the forefront of my lectures; seeing that they antici-

pate in the way of masterly sketch all which I shall attempt to accomplish, and indeed draw out the lines of much more, to which I shall not venture so much as to put my hand. They are the more welcome to me, because they encourage me to believe that if, in choosing the English language, its past and its present, as the subject of that brief course of lectures which I am to deliver in this place, I have chosen a subject which in many ways transcends my powers, and lies beyond the range of my knowledge, it is yet one in itself of deepest interest, and of fully recognized value. Nor can I refrain from hoping that even with my imperfect handling, it is an argument which will find an answer and an echo in the hearts of all who hear me; which would have found this at any time; which will do so especially at the present. For these are times which naturally rouse into liveliest activity all our latent affections for the land of our birth. It is one of the compensations, indeed the greatest of all, for the wastefulness, the woe, the cruel losses of war,* that it causes and indeed compels a people to know itself a people; leading each one to esteem and prize most that which he has in common with his fellow countrymen, and not now any longer those things which separate and divide him from them.

And the love of our own language, what is it in fact, but the love of our country expressing itself in one particular direction? If the great acts of

* These lectures were first delivered during the Russian War.

that nation to which we belong are precious to us, if we feel ourselves made greater by their greatness, summoned to a nobler life by the nobleness of Englishmen who have already lived and died, and have bequeathed to us a name which must not by us be made less, what exploits of theirs can well be nobler, what can more clearly point out their native land and ours as having fulfilled a glorious past, as being destined for a glorious future, than that they should have acquired for themselves and for those who come after them a clear, a strong, an harmonious, a noble language? For all this bears witness to corresponding merits in those that speak it, to clearness of mental vision, to strength, to harmony, to nobleness in them that have gradually formed and shaped it to be the utterance of their inmost life and being.

To know of this language, the stages which it has gone through, the sources from which its riches have been derived, the gains which it is now making, the perils which have threatened or are threatening it, the losses which it has sustained, the capacities which may be yet latent in it, waiting to be evoked, the points in which it transcends other tongues, in which it comes short of them, all this may well be the object of worthy ambition to every one of us. So may we hope to be ourselves guardians of its purity, and not corrupters of it; to introduce, it may be, others into an intelligent knowledge of that, with which we shall have ourselves more than a merely superficial acquaintance; to bequeath it to those who come after us not worse

than we received it ourselves. "Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna,"—this should be our motto in respect at once of our country, and of our country's tongue.

Nor shall we, I trust, any of us feel this subject to be alien or remote from the purposes which have brought us to study within these walls. It is true that we are mainly occupied here in studying other tongues than our own. The time we bestow upon it is small as compared with that bestowed on those others. And yet one of our main purposes in learning them is that we may better understand this. Nor ought any other to dispute with it the first and foremost place in our reverence, our gratitude, and our love. It has been well and worthily said by an illustrious German scholar: "The care of the national language I consider as at all times a sacred trust and a most important privilege of the higher orders of society. Every man of education should make it the object of his unceasing concern, to preserve his language pure and entire, to speak it, so far as is in his power, in all its beauty and perfection. . . . . A nation whose language becomes rude and barbarous, must be on the brink of barbarism in regard to everything else. A nation which allows her language to go to ruin, is parting with the last half of her intellectual independence, and testifies her willingness to cease to exist."*

But this knowledge, like all other knowledge which is worth attaining, is only to be attained at

* F. Schlegel, *History of Literature, Lecture* 10.

the price of labour and pains. The language which at this day we speak is the result of processes which have been going forward for hundreds and for thousands of years. Nay more, it is not too much to affirm that processes modifying the English which at the present day we write and speak, have been at work from the first day that man, being gifted with discourse of reason, projected his thought from out himself, and embodied and contemplated it in his word. Which things being so, if we would understand this language as it now is, we must know something of it as it has been; we must be able to measure, however roughly, the forces which have been at work upon it, moulding and shaping it into the forms which it now wears.

At the same time various prudential considerations must determine for us how far up we will endeavour to trace the course of its history. There are those who may seek to trace our language to the forests of Germany and Scandinavia, to investigate its relation to all the kindred tongues that were there spoken; again, to follow it up, till it and they are seen descending from an elder stock; nor once to pause, till they have assigned to it its place not merely in respect of that small group of languages which are immediately round it, but in respect of all the tongues and languages of the earth. I can imagine few studies of a more surpassing interest than this. Others, however, must be content with seeking such insight into their native language as may be within the reach of all who, unable to make this the subject of

especial research, possessing neither that vast compass of knowledge, nor that immense apparatus of books, not being at liberty to dedicate to it that devotion almost of a life which, followed out to the full, it would require, have yet an intelligent interest in their mother tongue, and desire to learn as much of its growth and history and construction as may be reasonably deemed within their reach. To such as these I shall suppose myself to be speaking. It would be a piece of great presumption in me to undertake to speak to any other, or to assume any other ground than this for myself.

I know there are some, who, when they are invited to enter at all upon the past history of the language, are inclined to make answer—"To what end such studies to us? Why cannot we leave them to a few antiquaries and grammarians? Sufficient to us to know the laws of our present English, to obtain an accurate acquaintance with the language as we now find it, without concerning ourselves with the phases through which it has previously past." This may sound plausible enough; and I can quite understand a real lover of his native tongue, who has not bestowed much thought upon the subject, arguing in this manner. And yet indeed such argument proceeds altogether on a mistake. One sufficient reason why we should occupy ourselves with the past of our language is, because the present is only intelligible in the light of the past, often of a very remote past indeed. There are anomalies out of number now existing in our language, which the pure logic of grammar is

quite incapable of explaining; which nothing but a knowledge of its historic evolutions, and of the disturbing forces which have made themselves felt therein, will ever enable us to understand. Even as, again, unless we possess some knowledge of the past, it is impossible that we can ourselves advance a single step in the unfolding of the latent capabilities of the language, without the danger of committing some barbarous violation of its very primary laws.

The plan which I have laid down for myself, and to which I shall adhere, in this lecture and in those which will succeed it, is as follows. In this my first lecture I will ask you to consider the language as now it is, to decompose with me some specimens of it, to prove by these means, of what elements it is compact, and what functions in it these elements or component parts severally fulfil; nor shall I leave this subject without asking you to admire the happy marriage in our tongue of the languages of the north and south, an advantage which it alone among all the languages of Europe enjoys. Having thus presented to ourselves the body which we wish to submit to scrutiny, and having become acquainted, however slightly, with its composition, I shall invite you to go back with me, and trace some of the leading changes to which in time past it has been submitted, and through which it has arrived at what it now is; and these changes I shall contemplate under four aspects, dedicating a lecture to each;—changes which have

resulted from the birth of new, or the reception of foreign, words;—changes consequent on the rejection or extinction of words or powers once possessed by the language;—changes through the altered meaning of words;—and lastly, as not unworthy of our attention, but often growing out of very deep roots, changes in the orthography of words.

I shall everywhere seek to bring the subject down to our present time, and not merely call your attention to the changes which have been, but to those also which are now being, effected. I shall not account the fact that some are going on, so to speak, before our own eyes, a sufficient ground to excuse me from noticing them, but rather an additional reason for doing this. For indeed changes which are actually proceeding in our own time, and which we are ourselves helping to bring about, are the very ones which we are most likely to fail in observing. There is so much to hide the nature of them, and indeed their very existence, that, except it may be by a very few, they will often pass wholly unobserved. Loud and sudden revolutions attract and compel notice; but silent and gradual, although with issues far vaster in store, run their course, and it is only when their cycle is completed or nearly so, that men perceive what mighty transforming forces have been at work unnoticed in the very midst of themselves.

Thus, to apply what I have just affirmed to this matter of language—how few aged persons, let them retain the fullest possession of their faculties,

are conscious of any difference between the spoken language of their early youth, and that of their old age; that words and ways of using words are obsolete now, which were usual then; that many words are current now, which had no existence at that time. And yet it is certain that so it must be. A man may fairly be supposed to remember clearly and well for sixty years back; and it needs less than five of these sixties to bring us to the period of Spenser, and not more than eight to set us in the time of Chaucer and Wiclif. How great a change, what vast modifications in our language, within eight memories. No one, contemplating this whole term, will deny the immensity of the change. For all this, we may be tolerably sure that, had it been possible to interrogate a series of eight persons, such as together had filled up this time, intelligent men, but men whose attention had not been especially roused to this subject, each in his turn would have denied that there had been any change worth speaking of, perhaps any change at all, during his lifetime. And yet, having regard to the multitude of words which have fallen into disuse during these four or five hundred years, we are sure that there must have been some lives in this chain which saw those words in use at their commencement, and out of use before their close. And so too, of the multitude of words which have sprung up in this period, some, nay, a vast number, must have come into being within the limits of each of these lives. It cannot then be superfluous to direct attention to

that which is actually going forward in our language. It is indeed that, which of all is most likely to be unobserved by us.

With these preliminary remarks I proceed at once to the special subject of my lecture of to-day. And first, starting from the recognized fact that the English is not a simple but a composite language, made up of several elements, as are the people who speak it, I would suggest to you the profit and instruction which we might derive from seeking to resolve it into its component parts—from taking, that is, any passage of an English author, distributing the words of which it is made up according to the languages from which they are drawn; estimating the relative numbers and proportions, which these languages have severally lent us; as well as the character of the words which they have thrown into the common stock of our tongue.

Thus, suppose the English language to be divided into a hundred parts; of these, to make a rough distribution, sixty would be Saxon; thirty would be Latin (including of course the Latin which has come to us through the French); five would be Greek. We should thus have assigned ninety-five parts, leaving the other five, perhaps too large a residue, to be divided among all the other languages from which we have adopted isolated words. And yet these are not few; from our wide extended colonial empire we come in contact with half the world; we have picked up words in every quarter,

and, the English language possessing a singular power of incorporating foreign elements into itself, have not scrupled to make many of these our own.

Thus we have a certain number of Hebrew words, mostly, if not entirely, belonging to religious matters, as 'amen,' 'cabala,' 'cherub,' 'ephod,' 'gehenna,' 'hallelujah,' 'hosanna,' 'jubilee,' 'leviathan,' 'manna,' 'Messiah,' 'sabbath,' 'Satan,' 'seraph,' 'shibboleth,' 'talmud.' The Arabic words in our language are more numerous; we have several arithmetical and astronomical terms, as 'algebra,' 'almanach,' 'azimuth,' 'cypher,'* 'nadir,' 'talisman,' 'zenith,' 'zero;' and chemical, for the Arabs were the chemists, no less than the astronomers and arithmeticians of the middle ages; as 'alcohol,' 'alembic,' 'alkali,' 'elixir.' Add to these the names of animals, plants, fruits, or articles of merchandize first introduced by them to the notice of Western Europe; as 'amber,' 'artichoke,' 'barragan,' 'camphor,' 'coffee,' 'cotton,' 'crimson,' 'gazelle,' 'giraffe,' 'jar,' 'jasmin,' 'lake' (lacca), 'lemon,' 'lime,' 'lute,' 'mattress,' 'mummy,' 'saffron,' 'sherbet,' 'shrub,' 'sofa,' 'sugar,' 'syrup,' 'tamarind;' and some further terms, 'admiral,' 'amulet,' 'arsenal,' 'assassin,' 'barbican,' 'caliph,' 'caffre,' 'carat,' 'divan,' 'dragoman,'† 'emir,' 'fakir,' 'firman,' 'harem,' 'hazard,' 'houri,' 'magazine,' 'mamaluke,' 'mi-

* Yet see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 985.

† The word hardly deserves to be called English, yet in Pope's time it had made some progress toward naturalization.

naret,' 'monsoon,' 'mosque,' 'nabob,' 'razzia,' 'sahara,' 'simoom,' 'sirocco,' 'sultan,' 'tarif,' 'vizier;' and I believe we shall have nearly completed the list. We have moreover a few Persian words, as 'azure,' 'bazaar,' 'bezoar,' 'caravan,' 'caravanserai,' 'chess,' 'dervish,' 'lilac,' 'orange,' 'saraband,' 'taffeta,' 'tambour,' 'turban;' this last appearing in strange forms at its first introduction into the language, thus 'tolibant' (Puttenham), 'tulipant' (Herbert's *Travels*), 'turribant' (Spenser), 'turbat,' 'turbant,' and at length 'turban.' We have also a few Turkish, such as 'chouse,' 'janisary,' 'odalisque,' 'sash,' 'tulip.' Of 'civet' and 'scimitar' I believe it can only be asserted that they are Eastern. The following are Hindostanee, 'avatar,' 'bungalow,' 'calico,' 'chintz,' 'cowrie,' 'lac,' 'muslin,' 'punch,' 'rupee,' 'toddy.' 'Tea,' or 'tcha,' as it was spelt at first, of course is Chinese, so too are 'junk' and 'satin.'

The New World has given us a certain number of words, Indian and other—'cacique' ('cassiqui,' in Ralegh's *Guiana*), 'canoo,' 'chocolate,' 'cocoa,' 'condor,' 'hamoc' ('hamaca' in Ralegh), 'jalap,'

Of a real or pretended polyglottist, who might thus have served as an universal *interpreter*, he says:

"Pity you was not *druggerman* at Babel."

'Truckman,' or more commonly 'truchman,' familiar to all readers of our early literature, is only another form of this, one which probably has come to us through 'turcimanno,' the Italian form of the word.

'lama,' 'maize' (Haytian), 'pampas,' 'pemmican,' 'potato' ('batata' in our earlier voyagers), 'raccoon,' 'sachem,' 'squaw,' 'tobacco,' 'tomahawk,' 'tomata' (Mexican), 'wigwam.' If 'hurricane' is a word which Europe originally obtained from the Caribbean islanders,* it should of course be included in this list. A certain number of words also we have received, one by one, from various languages, which sometimes have not bestowed on us more than this single one. Thus 'hussar' is Hungarian; 'caloyer,' Romaic; 'mammoth,' of some Siberian language; 'tattoo,' Polynesian; 'steppe,' Tartarian; 'sago,' 'bamboo,' 'rattan,' 'ourang-outang,' are all, I believe, Malay words; 'assegai,' 'zebra,' 'chimpanzee,' 'fetisch,' belong to different African dialects; the last, however, having reached Europe through the channel of the Portuguese.

To come nearer home—we have a certain number of Italian words, as 'balcony,' 'baldachin,' 'balustrade,' 'bandit,' 'bravo,' 'bust' (it was 'busto' as first used in English, and therefore from the Italian, not from the French), 'cameo,' 'canto,' 'caricature,' 'carnival,' 'cartoon,' 'charlatan,' 'concert,' 'conversazione,' 'cupola,' 'ditto,' 'doge,' 'domino,' 'felucca,' 'fresco,' 'gazette,' 'generalissimo,' 'gondola,' 'gonfalon,' 'grotto,' ('grotta' is the earliest form in which we have it in English), 'gusto,' 'harlequin,' 'imbroglio,'

* See Washington Irving, *Life and Voyages of Columbus*, b. 8, c. 9.

'inamorato,' 'influenza,' 'lava,' 'malaria,' 'manifesto,' 'masquerade' ('mascarata' in Hacket), 'motto,' 'nuncio,' 'opera,' 'oratorio,' 'pantaloon,' 'parapet,' 'pedantry,' 'pianoforte,' 'piazza,' 'portico,' 'proviso,' 'regatta,' 'ruffian,' 'scaramouch,' 'sequin,' 'seraglio,' 'sirocco,' 'sonnet,' 'stanza,' 'stiletto,' 'stucco,' 'studio,' 'terracotta,' 'umbrella,' 'virtuoso,' 'vista,' 'volcano,' 'zany.' 'Becco,' and 'cornuto,' 'fantastico,' 'magnifico,' 'impress' (the armorial device upon shields, and appearing constantly in its Italian form 'impresa'), 'saltimbanco' (= mountebank), all once common enough, are now obsolete. Sylvester uses often 'farfalla' for butterfly, but, as far as I know, this use is peculiar to him. If these are at all the whole number of our Italian words, and I cannot call to mind any other, the Spanish in the language are nearly as numerous; nor indeed would it be wonderful if they were more so; for our points of contact with Spain, friendly and hostile, have been much more real than with Italy. Thus we have from the Spanish 'albino,' 'alligator' ('el lagarto'), 'alcove,'* 'armada,' 'armadillo,' 'barricade,' 'bastinado,' 'bravado,' 'caiman,' 'cambist,' 'camisado,' 'carbonado,' 'cargo,' 'cigar,' 'cochineal,' 'creole,' 'desperado,' 'don,' 'duenna,' 'eldorado,' 'embargo,' 'flotilla,' 'gala,' 'grandee,' 'grenade,' 'guerilla,' 'hooker,'† 'infanta,' 'jennet,'

* On the question whether this ought not to have been included among the Arabic, see Diez, *Wörterbuch d. Roman. Sprachen*, p. 10.

† Not in our dictionaries; but a kind of coasting vessel

'junto,' 'merino,' 'mosquito,' 'mulatto,' 'negro,' 'olio,' 'ombre,' 'palaver,' 'parade,' 'parasol,' 'parroquet,' 'peccadillo,' 'picaroon,' 'platina,' 'poncho,' 'punctilio' (for a long time spelt 'puntillo,' in English books), 'quinine,' 'reformado,' 'savannah,' 'serenade,' 'sherry,' 'stampede,' 'stoccado,' 'strappado,' 'tornado,' 'vanilla,' 'verandah.' 'Buffalo' also is Spanish; 'buff' or 'buffle' being the proper English word; 'caprice' too we probably obtained rather from Spain than Italy, as we find it written 'capricho' by those who used it first. Other Spanish words, once familiar, are now extinct. 'Punctilio' lives on, but not 'punto,' which occurs in Bacon. 'Privado,' signifying a prince's favourite, one admitted to his *privacy* (no uncommon word in Jeremy Taylor and Fuller), has quite disappeared; so too has 'quirpo' (cuerpo), the name given to a jacket fitting close to the *body*; 'quellio' (cuello), a ruff or *neck*-collar; and 'matachin,' the title of a sword-dance; these are all frequent in our early dramatists; and 'flota' was the constant name of the treasure-fleet from the Indies. 'Intermess' is employed by Evelyn, and is the Spanish 'entremes,' though not recognized as such in our Dictionaries. 'Mandarin' and 'marmalade' are our only Portuguese words I can call to mind. A good many of our sea-terms are Dutch, as 'sloop,'

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well known to seafaring men, the Spanish 'urca;' thus in Oldys' *Life of Raleigh*: "Their galleons, galleasses, gallies, *urcas*, and zabras were miserably shattered."

'schooner,' 'yacht,' 'boom,' 'skipper,' 'tafferel,' 'to smuggle;' 'to wear,' in the sense of veer, as when we say '*to wear* a ship;' 'skates,' too, and 'stiver' are Dutch. Celtic *things* are for the most part designated among us by Celtic words; such as 'bard,' 'kilt,' 'clan,' 'pibroch,' 'plaid,' 'reel.' Nor only such as these, which are all of them comparatively of modern introduction, but a considerable number, how large a number is yet a very unsettled question, of words which at a much earlier date found admission into our tongue, are derived from this quarter.

Now, of course, I have no right to presume that any among us are equipped with that knowledge of other tongues, which shall enable us to detect of ourselves and at once the nationality of all or most of the words which we may meet—some of them greatly disguised, and having undergone manifold transformations in the process of their adoption among us; but only that we have such helps at command in the shape of dictionaries and the like, and so much diligence in their use, as will enable us to discover the quarter from which the words we may encounter have reached us; and I will confidently say that few studies of the kind will be more fruitful, will suggest more various matter of reflection, will more lead you into the secrets of the English tongue, than an analysis of a certain number of passages drawn from different authors, such as I have just now proposed. For this analysis you will take some passage of English verse or prose—say the first ten lines of *Paradise Lost*—

or the Lord's Prayer—or the 23rd Psalm; you will distribute the whole body of words contained in that passage, of course not omitting the smallest, according to their nationalities—writing, it may be, A over every Anglo-Saxon word, L over every Latin, and so on with the others, if any other should occur in the portion which you have submitted to this examination. When this is done, you will count up the *number* of those which each language contributes; again, you will note the *character* of the words derived from each quarter.

Yet here, before I pass further, I would observe in respect of those which come from the Latin, that it will be desirable further to mark whether they are directly from it, and such might be marked L^1, or only mediately from it, and to us directly from the French, which would be L^2, or L at second hand—our English word being only in the second generation descended from the Latin, not the child, but the child's child. There is a rule that holds pretty constantly good, by which you may determine this point. It is this,—that if a word be directly from the Latin, it will not have undergone any alteration or modification in its form and shape, save only in the termination—'innocentia,' will have become 'innocency,' 'natio,' will have become 'nation,' 'firmamentum' 'firmament,' but nothing more. On the other hand, if it comes *through* the French, it will generally be considerably altered in its passage. It will have undergone a process of lubrication; its sharply defined Latin outline will in good part have departed from it;

thus 'crown' is from 'corona,' but through 'couronne,' and itself a dissyllable, 'coroune,' in our earlier English; 'treasure' is from 'thesaurus,' but through 'trésor;' 'emperor' is the Latin 'imperator,' but it was first 'empereur.' It will often happen that the substantive has past through this process, having reached us through the intervention of the French; while we have only felt at a later period our want of the adjective also, which we have proceeded to borrow direct from the Latin. Thus, 'people' is indeed 'populus,' but it was 'peuple' first, while 'popular' is a direct transfer of a Latin vocable into our English glossary. So too 'enemy' is 'inimicus,' but it was first softened in the French, and had its Latin physiognomy to a great degree obliterated, while 'inimical' is Latin throughout; 'parish' is 'paroisse,' but 'parochial' is 'parochialis;' 'chapter' is 'chapitre,' but 'capitular' is 'capitularis.'

Sometimes you will find in English what I may call the double adoption of a Latin word; which now makes part of our vocabulary in two shapes; 'doppelgängers' the Germans would call such words. There is first the elder word, which the French has given us; but which, before it gave, it had fashioned and moulded, cutting it short, it may be, by a syllable or more, for the French devours letters and syllables; and there is the later word which we borrowed immediately from the Latin. I will mention a few examples; 'secure' and 'sure,' both from 'securus,' but one directly, the other through the French; 'fidelity'

and 'fealty,' both from 'fidelitas,' but one directly, the other at second-hand; 'species' and 'spice,' both from 'species,' spices being properly only *kinds* of aromatic drugs; 'blaspheme' and 'blame,' both from 'blasphemare,'* but 'blame' immediately from 'blâmer.' Add to these 'granary' and 'garner;' 'captain' (capitaneus) and 'chieftain;' 'tradition' and 'treason;' 'abyss' and 'abysm;' 'regal' and 'royal;' 'legal' and 'loyal;' 'cadence' and 'chance;' 'balsam' and 'balm;' 'hospital' and 'hotel;' 'digit' and 'doit;' 'pagan' and 'paynim;' 'captive' and 'caitiff;' 'persecute' and 'pursue;' 'superficies' and 'surface;' 'faction' and 'fashion;' 'particle' and 'parcel;' 'redemption' and 'ransom;' 'probe' and 'prove;' 'abbreviate' and 'abridge;' 'dormitory' and 'dortoir' or 'dorter' (this last now obsolete, but not uncommon in Jeremy Taylor); 'desiderate' and 'desire;' 'fact' and 'feat;' 'major' and 'mayor;' 'radius' and 'ray;' 'pauper' and 'poor;' 'potion' and 'poison;' 'ration' and 'reason;' 'oration' and 'orison.'† I have, in the instancing of these,

* This particular instance of double adoption, of 'dimorphism' as Latham calls it, 'dittology' as Heyse, recurs in Italian, 'bestemmiare' and 'biasimare;' and in Spanish, 'blasfemar' and 'lastimar.'

† Somewhat different from this, yet itself also curious, is the passing of an Anglo-Saxon word in two different forms into English, and continuing in both; thus 'desk' and 'dish,' both the Anglo-Saxon 'disc,' the German 'tisch;' 'beech' and 'book,' both the Anglo-Saxon 'boc,' our first books being *beechen* tablets (see Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, s. vv.' Buch,' 'Buche'); 'girdle' and 'kirtle,' both of them corresponding to

named always the Latin form before the French; but the reverse I suppose in every instance is the order in which the words were adopted by us; we had 'pursue' before 'persecute,' 'spice' before 'species,' 'royalty' before 'regality,' and so with the others.*

The explanation of this greater change which the earlier form of the word has undergone, is not far to seek. Words which have been introduced into a language at an early period, when as yet writing is rare, and books are few or none, when therefore orthography is unfixed, or being purely phonetic, cannot properly be said to exist at all, such words for a long while live orally on the lips of men, before they are set down in writing; and out of this fact it is that we shall for the most part find them reshaped and remoulded by the people who have adopted them, entirely assimilated to *their* language in form and termination, so as in a little while to

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the German 'gürtel;' already in Anglo-Saxon a double spelling, 'gyrdel,' 'cyrtel,' had prepared for the double words; so too 'haunch' and 'hinge;' 'lady' and 'lofty;' 'shirt,' and 'skirt;' 'black' and 'bleak;' 'pond' and 'pound;' 'deck' and 'thatch;' 'deal' and 'dole;' 'weald' and 'wood;' 'dew' and 'thaw;' 'wayward' and 'awkward;' 'dune' and 'down;' 'hood' and 'hat;' 'ghost' and 'gust;' 'evil' and 'ill;' 'mouth' and 'moth;' 'hedge' and 'hay.'

* We have in the same way double adoptions from the Greek, one direct, at least as regards the forms; one modified by its passage through some other language; thus, 'adamant' and 'diamond;' 'monastery' and 'minster;' 'scandal' and 'slander;' 'theriac' and 'treacle;' 'asphodel' and 'daffodil;' 'presbyter' and 'priest.'

be almost or quite indistinguishable from natives. On the other hand a most effectual check to this process, a process sometimes barbarizing and defacing, however it may be the only one which will make the newly brought in entirely homogeneous with the old and already existing, is imposed by the existence of a much written language and a full formed literature. The foreign word, being once adopted into these, can no longer undergo a thorough transformation. For the most part the utmost which use and familiarity can do with it now, is to cause the gradual dropping of the foreign termination. Yet this too is not unimportant; it often goes far to making a home for a word, and hindering it from wearing the appearance of a foreigner and stranger.*

* The French itself has also a double adoption, or as perhaps we should more accurately call it there, a double formation, from the Latin, and such as quite bears out what has been said above: one going far back in the history of the language, the other belonging to a later and more literary period; on which subject there are some admirable remarks by Génin, *Récréations Philologiques*, vol. i. pp. 162—166; and see Fuchs, *Die Roman. Sprachen*, p. 125. Thus from 'separare' is derived 'sevrer,' to separate the child from its mother's breast, to wean, but also 'séparer,' without this special sense; from 'pastor,' 'pâtre,' a shepherd in the literal, and 'pasteur' the same in a tropical, sense; from 'catena,' 'chaîne' and 'cadène;' from 'fragilis,' 'frêle' and 'fragile;' from 'pensare,' 'peser' and 'penser;' from 'gehenna,' 'gêne' and 'géhenne;' from 'captivus,' 'chétif' and 'captif;' from 'nativus,' 'naïf' and 'natif;' from 'designare,' 'dessiner' and 'désigner;' from 'decimare,' 'dîmer' and 'décimer;' from 'consumere,' 'consommer' and 'consumer;' from 'simulare,'

But to return from this digression—I said just now that you would learn very much from observing and calculating the proportions in which the words of one descent and those of another occur in any passage which you analyse. Thus examine the Lord's Prayer. It consists of exactly seventy words. You will find that only the following six claim the rights of Latin citizenship—'trespasses,' 'trespass,' 'temptation,' 'deliver,' 'power,' 'glory.' Nor would it be very difficult to substitute for any one of these a Saxon word. Thus for 'trespasses' might be substituted 'sins;' for 'deliver' 'free;' for 'power' 'might;' for 'glory' 'brightness;' which would only leave 'temptation,' about which there could be the slightest difficulty, and 'trials,' though we now ascribe to the word a somewhat different sense, would in fact exactly correspond to it. This is but a small percentage,

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'sembler' and 'simuler;' from the low Latin, 'disjejunare,' 'dîner' and 'déjeûner;' from 'acceptare,' 'acheter' and 'accepter;' from 'homo,' 'on' and 'homme;' from 'paganus,' 'payen' and 'paysan;' from 'obedientia,' 'obéissance' and 'obédience;' from 'strictus,' 'étroit' and 'strict;' from 'sacramentum,' 'serment' and 'sacrement;' from 'ministerium,' 'métier' and 'ministère;' from 'parabola,' 'parole' and 'parabole;' from 'peregrinus,' 'pélerin' and 'pérégrin;' from 'factio,' 'façon' and 'faction,' and it has now adopted 'factio' in a third shape, that is, in our English 'fashion;' from 'pietas,' 'pitié' and 'piété;' from 'capitulum,' 'chapitre' and 'capitule,' a botanical term. So, too, in Italian, 'manco,' maimed, and 'monco,' maimed *of a hand;* 'rifutáre,' to refute, and 'rifiutáre,' to refuse; 'dama' and 'donna,' both forms of 'domina.'

six words in seventy, or less than ten in the hundred; and we often light upon a still smaller proportion. Thus take the first three verses of the 23rd Psalm:—"The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing; He shall feed me in a green *pasture*, and lead me forth beside the waters of *comfort*; He shall *convert* my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake." Here are forty-five words, and only the three in italics are Latin; and for every one of these too it would be easy to substitute a word of Saxon origin; little more, that is, than the proportion of seven in the hundred; while, still stronger than this, in five verses out of Genesis, containing one hundred and thirty words, there are only five not Saxon, less, that is, than four in the hundred.

Shall we therefore conclude that these are the proportions in which the Anglo-Saxon and Latin elements of the language stand to one another? If they are so, then my former proposal to express their relations by sixty and thirty was greatly at fault; and seventy and twenty, or even eighty and ten, would fall short of adequately representing the real predominance of the Saxon over the Latin element of the language. But it is not so; the Anglo-Saxon words by no means outnumber the Latin in the degree which the analysis of those passages would seem to imply. It is not that there are so many more Anglo-Saxon words, but that the words which there are, being words of more primary necessity, do therefore so much more

frequently recur. The proportions which the analysis of the *dictionary,* that is, of the language *at rest,* would furnish, are very different from these which I have just instanced, and which the analysis of *sentences,* or of the language *in motion,* gives. Thus if we examine the total vocabulary of the English Bible, not more than sixty per cent. of the words are native; such are the results which the Concordance gives; but in the actual translation the native words are from ninety in some passages to ninety-six in others per cent.*

The notice of this fact will lead us to some very important conclusions as to the *character* of the words which the Saxon and the Latin severally furnish; and principally to this:—that while the English language is thus compact in the main of these two elements, we must not for all this regard these two as making, one and the other, exactly the same *kind* of contributions to it. On the contrary their contributions are of very different character. The Anglo-Saxon is not so much, as I have just called it, one element of the English language, as the foundation of it, the basis. All its joints, its whole *articulation,* its sinews and its ligaments, the great body of articles, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, numerals, auxiliary verbs, all smaller words which serve to knit together and bind the larger into sentences, these, not to speak of the grammatical structure of the

* See Marsh, *Manual of the English Language,* Engl. Ed. p. 88 *sqq.*

language, are exclusively Saxon. The Latin may contribute its tale of bricks, yea, of goodly and polished hewn stones, to the spiritual building; but the mortar, with all that holds and binds the different parts of it together, and constitutes them into a house, is Saxon throughout. I remember Selden in his *Table Talk* using another comparison; but to the same effect: "If you look upon the language spoken in the Saxon time, and the language spoken now, you will find the difference to be just as if a man had a cloak which he wore plain in Queen Elizabeth's days, and since, here has put in a piece of red, and there a piece of blue, and here a piece of green, and there a piece of orange-tawny. We borrow words from the French, Italian, Latin, as every pedantic man pleases."

I believe this to be the law which holds good in respect of all composite languages. However composite they may be, yet they are only so in regard of their words. There may be a medley in respect of these, some coming from one quarter, some from another; but there is never a mixture of grammatical forms and inflections. One or other language entirely predominates here, and everything has to conform and subordinate itself to the laws of this ruling and ascendant language. The Anglo-Saxon is the ruling language in our present English. Thus while it has thought good to drop its genders, even so the French substantives which come among us, must also leave theirs behind them; as in like manner the French verbs must renounce their own conjugations, and adapt them-

selves to ours.* I believe that a remarkable parallel to this might be found in the language of Persia, since the conquest of that country by the Arabs. The ancient Persian religion fell with the government, but the language remained totally unaffected by the revolution, in its grammatical structure and character. Arabic vocables, the only exotic words found in Persian, are found in numbers varying with the object and quality, style and taste of the writers, but pages of pure idiomatic Persian may be written without employing a single word from the Arabic.

At the same time the secondary or superinduced language, even while it is quite unable to force any of its forms on the language which receives its words, may yet compel that to renounce a portion of its own forms, by the impossibility which is practically found to exist of making them fit the new comers; and thus it may exert, although not a positive, yet a negative, influence on the grammar of the other tongue. It has been so, as is generally admitted, in the instance of our own. "When the English language was inundated by a vast influx of French words, few, if any, French forms were received into its grammar; but the Saxon forms soon dropped away, because they did not suit the new roots; and the genius of the language, from having to deal with the newly imported words in

* W. Schlegel (*Indische Bibliothek*, vol. i. p. 284): Coëunt quidem paullatim in novum corpus peregrina vocabula, sed grammatica linguarum, unde petitæ sunt, ratio perit.

a rude state, was induced to neglect the inflections of the native ones. This for instance led to the introduction of the *s* as the universal termination of all plural nouns, which agreed with the usage of the French language, and was not alien from that of the Saxon, but was merely an extension of the termination of the ancient masculine to other classes of nouns."*

If you wish to convince yourselves by actual experience, of the fact which I just now asserted, namely, that the radical constitution of the language is Saxon, I would say, Try to compose a sentence, let it be only of ten or a dozen words, and the subject entirely of your choice, employing therein only words which are of a Latin derivation. I venture to say you will find it impossible, or next to impossible, to do it; whichever way you turn, some obstacle will meet you in the face. And while it is thus with the Latin, whole pages might be written, I do not say in philosophy or theology or upon any abstruser subject, but on familiar matters of common everyday life, in which every word should be of Saxon extraction, not one of Latin; and these, pages in which, with the exercise of a little patience and ingenuity, all appearance of awkwardness and constraint should be avoided, so that it should never occur to the reader, unless otherwise informed, that the writer had submitted himself to

* J. Grimm, quoted in *The Philological Museum*, vol. i. p. 667.

this restraint and limitation in the words which he employed, and was only drawing them from one section of the English language. Sir Thomas Browne has given several long paragraphs so constructed. Take for instance the following, which is only a little fragment of one of them: "The first and foremost step to all good works is the dread and fear of the Lord of heaven and earth, which through the Holy Ghost enlighteneth the blindness of our sinful hearts to tread the ways of wisdom, and lead our feet into the land of blessing."* This is not stiffer than the ordinary English of his time. I would suggest to you at your leisure to make these two experiments; you will find it, I think, exactly as I have here affirmed.

While thus I bring before you the fact that it would be quite possible to write English, foregoing altogether the use of the Latin portion of the language, I would not have you therefore to conclude that this portion of the language is of little value, or that we could draw from the resources of our Teutonic tongue efficient substitutes for all the words which it has contributed to our glossary. I am persuaded that we could not; and, if we could, that it would not be desirable. I mention this, because there is sometimes a regret expressed that we have not kept our language more free from the admixture of Latin, a suggestion made that we should even now endeavour to keep under

* *Works*, vol. iv. p. 202.

the Latin element of it, and as little as possible avail ourselves of it. I remember Lord Brougham urging upon the students at Glasgow as a help to writing good English, that they should do their best to rid their diction of long-tailed words in 'osity' and 'ation.' He plainly intended to indicate by this phrase all learned Latin words, or words derived from the Latin. This exhortation is by no means superfluous; for doubtless there were writers of a former age, Samuel Johnson in the last century, Henry More and Sir Thomas Browne in the century preceding, who gave undue preponderance to the learned, or Latin, portion in our language; and very much of its charm, of its homely strength and beauty, of its most popular and truest idioms, would have perished from it, had they succeeded in persuading others to write as they had written.

But for all this we could *almost* as ill spare this side of the language as the other. It represents and supplies needs not less real than the other does. Philosophy and science and the arts of a high civilization find their utterance in the Latin words of our language, or, if not in the Latin, in the Greek, which for present purposes may be grouped with them. How should they have found utterance in the speech of rude tribes, which, never having cultivated the things, must needs have been without the words which should express those things. Granting too that, *cæteris paribus*, when a Latin and a Saxon word offer themselves to our choice, we shall generally do

best to employ the Saxon, to speak of 'happiness' rather than 'felicity,' 'almighty' rather than 'omnipotent,' a 'forerunner' rather than a 'precursor,' still these latter must be regarded as much denizens in the language as the former, no alien interlopers, but possessing the rights of citizenship as fully as the most Saxon word of them all. One part of the language is not to be favoured at the expense of the other; the Saxon at the cost of the Latin, as little as the Latin at the cost of the Saxon. "Both are indispensable; and speaking generally without stopping to distinguish as to subject, both are *equally* indispensable. Pathos, in situations which are homely, or at all connected with domestic affections, naturally moves by Saxon words. Lyrical emotion of every kind, which (to merit the name of *lyrical*) must be in the state of flux and reflux, or, generally, of agitation, also requires the Saxon element of our language. And why? Because the Saxon is the aboriginal element; the basis and not the superstructure: consequently it comprehends all the ideas which are natural to the heart of man and to the elementary situations of life. And although the Latin often furnishes us with duplicates of these ideas, yet the Saxon, or monosyllabic part, has the advantage of precedency in our use and knowledge; for it is the language of the nursery whether for rich or poor, in which great philological academy no toleration is given to words in 'osity' or 'ation.' There is therefore a great advantage, as regards the consecration to our feelings, settled by usage and

custom upon the Saxon strands in the mixed yarn of our native tongue. And universally, this may be remarked—that wherever the passion of a poem is of that sort which *uses, presumes,* or *postulates* the ideas, without seeking to extend them, Saxon will be the 'cocoon' (to speak by the language applied to silk-worms), which the poem spins for itself. But on the other hand, where the motion of the feeling is *by* and *through* the ideas, where (as in religious or meditative poetry—Young's, for instance, or Cowper's), the pathos creeps and kindles underneath the very tissues of the thinking, there the Latin will predominate; and so much so that, whilst the flesh, the blood, and the muscle, will be often almost exclusively Latin, the articulations only, or hinges of connection, will be Anglo-Saxon."

These words which I have just quoted are De Quincey's—whom I must needs esteem the greatest living master of our English tongue. And on the same matter Sir Francis Palgrave has expressed himself thus: "Upon the languages of Teutonic origin the Latin has exercised great influence, but most energetically on our own. The very early admixture of the *Langue d'Oil,* the never interrupted employment of the French as the language of education, and the nomenclature created by the scientific and literary cultivation of advancing and civilized society, have Romanized our speech; the warp may be Anglo-Saxon, but the woof is Roman as well as the embroidery, and these foreign materials have so entered into the texture, that were

they plucked out, the web would be torn to rags, unravelled and destroyed."*

I do not know where we could find a happier example of the preservation of the golden mean in this matter than in our authorized Version of the Bible. One of the chief among the minor and secondary blessings which that Version has conferred on the nation or nations drawing spiritual life from it,—a blessing not small in itself, but only small by comparison with the infinitely higher blessings whereof it is the vehicle to them,—is the happy wisdom, the instinctive tact, with which its authors have steered between any futile mischievous attempt to ignore the full rights of the Latin part of the language on the one side, and on the other any burdening of their Version with such a multitude of learned Latin terms as should cause it to forfeit its homely character, and shut up large portions of it from the understanding of plain and unlearned men. There is a remarkable confession to this effect, to the wisdom, in fact, which guided them from above, to the providence that overruled their work, an honourable acknowledgment of the immense superiority in this respect of our English Version over the Romish, made by one now, unhappily, familiar with the latter, as once he was with our own. Among those who have recently abandoned the communion of the English Church one has exprest himself in deeply touching tones of lamentation

* *History of Normandy and England*, vol. i. p. 78.

over all, which in renouncing our translation, he feels himself to have foregone and lost. These are his words: "Who will not say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear, like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be almost things rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. . . . . The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments, and all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. . . . . It is his sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed, and controversy never soiled. In the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him, whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible."*

Such are his touching words; and certainly one has only to compare this version of ours with the Rhemish, and the transcendent excellence of our own reveals itself at once. I am not extolling now its superior scholarship; its greater freedom

* *Dublin Review*, June, 1853.

from by-ends; as little would I urge the fact that one translation is from the original Greek, the other from the Latin Vulgate, and thus the translation of a translation, often reproducing the mistakes of that translation; but, putting aside all considerations such as these, I speak only here of the superiority of the diction in which the meaning, be it correct or incorrect, is conveyed to English readers. Thus I open the Rhemish version at Galatians v. 19, where the long list of the "works of the flesh," and of the "fruit of the Spirit," is given. But what could a mere English reader make of words such as these—'impudicity,' 'ebrieties,' 'comessations,' 'longanimity,' all which occur in that passage? while our Version for 'ebrieties' has 'drunkenness,' for 'comessations' has 'revellings,' and so also for 'longanimity' 'longsuffering.' Or set over against one another such phrases as these,—in the Rhemish, "the exemplars of the celestials" (Heb. ix. 23), but in ours, "the patterns of things in the heavens." Or suppose if, instead of the words which *we* read at Heb. xiii. 16, namely, "To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," we read as follows, which are the words of the Rhemish, "Beneficence and communication do not forget; for with such hosts God is promerited"!—Who does not feel that if our Version had been composed in such Latin-English as this, had abounded in words like 'odible,' 'suasible,' 'exinanite,' 'contristate,' 'postulations,' 'coinquinations,' 'agnition,' 'zealatour,'

all, with many more of the same mint, in the Rhemish Version, our loss would have been great and enduring, one which would have searched into the whole religious life of our people, and been felt in the very depths of the national mind ?*

There was indeed something still deeper than love of sound and genuine English at work in our Translators, whether they were conscious of it or not, which hindered them from presenting the Scriptures to their fellow-countrymen dressed out in such a semi-Latin garb as this. The Reformation, which they were in this translation so mightily strengthening and confirming, was just a throwing off, on the part of the Teutonic nations, of that everlasting pupilage in which Rome would have held them ; an assertion at length that they were come to full age, and that not through her, but directly through Christ, they would address themselves unto God. The use of the Latin language as the language of worship, as the language in which the Scriptures might alone be read, had been the great badge of servitude, even as the Latin habits of thought and feeling which it promoted had been the great helps to the continuance of this servitude, through long ages. It lay deep then in the very nature of their cause that the Reformers should develop the Saxon, or essentially national, element in the language ; while it was just as natural that the Roman

* There is more on this matter in my book *On the Authorized Version of the New Testament*, pp. 33—35.

Catholic translators, if they must translate the Scriptures into English at all, should yet translate them into such English as should bear the nearest possible resemblance to the Latin Vulgate, which Rome with a very deep wisdom of this world would gladly have seen as the only one in the hands of the faithful.

Let me again, however, recur to the fact that what our Reformers did in this matter, they did without exaggeration; even as they had shown the same wise moderation in still higher matters. They gave to the Latin side of the language its rights, though they would not suffer it to encroach upon and usurp those of the Teutonic part of the language. It would be difficult not to believe, even if many outward signs said not the same, that great things are in store for the one language of Europe which thus serves as connecting link between the North and the South, between the languages spoken by the Teutonic nations of the North and by the Romance nations of the South; which holds on to and partakes of both; which is as a middle term between them.* There are who venture to hope that the English Church, being in like manner double-fronted, looking on the one side toward Rome, being herself truly Catholic, looking on the other toward the Protestant communions, being herself also protesting

* See a paper *On the Probable Future Position of the English Language*, by T. Watts, Esq., in the *Proceedings of the Philological Society*, vol. iv. p. 207.

and reforming, may yet in the providence of God have an important part to play for the reconciling of a divided Christendom. And if this ever should be so, if, notwithstanding our sins and unworthiness, so blessed a task should be in store for her, it will not be a small help and assistance thereunto, that the language in which her mediation will be effected is one wherein both parties may claim their own, in which neither will feel that it is receiving the adjudication of a stranger, of one who must be an alien from its deeper thoughts and habits, because an alien from its words, but a language in which both must recognize very much of that which is deepest and most precious of their own.

Nor is this prerogative which I have just claimed for our English the mere dream and fancy of patriotic vanity. The scholar who in our days is most profoundly acquainted with the great group of the Gothic languages in Europe, and a devoted lover, if ever there was such, of his native German, I mean Jacob Grimm, has expressed himself very nearly to the same effect, and given the palm over all to our English in words which you will not grudge to hear quoted, and with which I shall bring this lecture to a close. After ascribing to our language "a veritable power of expression, such as perhaps never stood at the command of any other language of men," he goes on to say, "Its highly spiritual genius, and wonderfully happy development and condition, have been the result of a surprisingly intimate union of the two noblest

languages in modern Europe, the Teutonic and the Romance.—It is well known in what relation these two stand to one another in the English tongue; the former supplying in far larger proportion the material groundwork, the latter the spiritual conceptions. In truth the English language, which by no mere accident has produced and upborne the greatest and most predominant poet of modern times, as distinguished from the ancient classical poetry (I can, of course, only mean Shakespeare), may with all right be called a world-language; and, like the English people, appears destined hereafter to prevail with a sway more extensive even than its present over all the portions of the globe.* For

* A little more than two centuries ago a poet, himself abundantly deserving the title of 'well-languaged,' which a cotemporary or near successor gave him, ventured in some remarkable lines timidly to anticipate this. Speaking of his native tongue, which he himself wrote with such vigour and purity, though wanting in the fiery impulses which go to the making of a first-rate poet, Daniel exclaims:

"And who, in time, knows whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent,
To enrich unknowing nations with our stores?
What worlds in the yet unformèd Occident
May come refined with the accents that are ours?
Or who can tell for what great work in hand
The greatness of our style is now ordained?
What powers it shall bring in, what spirits command,
What thoughts let out, what humours keep restrained,
What mischief it may powerfully withstand,
And what fair ends may thereby be attained?"

in wealth, good sense, and closeness of structure no other of the languages at this day spoken deserves to be compared with it—not even our German, which is torn, even as we are torn, and must first rid itself of many defects, before it can enter boldly into the lists, as a competitor with the English."*

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* *Ueber den Ursprung der Sprache*, Berlin, 1832, p. 50.

LECTURE II.

GAINS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

IT is not for nothing that we speak of some languages as *living*, of others as *dead*. All spoken languages may be ranged in the first class; for as men will never consent to use a language without more or less modifying it in their use, will never so far forego their own activity as to leave it exactly where they found it, it will therefore, so long as it is thus the utterance of human thought and feeling, inevitably show itself alive by many infallible proofs, by motion, growth, acquisition, loss, progress, and decay. A living language therefore is one which abundantly deserves this name; for it is one in which, spoken as it is by living men, a *vital* formative energy is still at work. It is one which is in course of actual evolution, which, if the life that animates it be a healthy one, is appropriating and assimilating to itself what it anywhere finds congenial to its own life, multiplying its resources, increasing its wealth; while at the same time it is casting off useless and cumbersome forms, dismissing from its vocabulary words of which it finds no use, rejecting from itself by a re-active energy the foreign and heterogeneous, which may for a while have been forced upon it. I would not assert that in

the process of all this it does not make mistakes; in the desire to simplify it may let go distinctions which were not useless, and which it would have been better to retain; the acquisitions which it makes are very far from being all gains; it sometimes rejects words as worthless, or suffers words to die out, which were most worthy to have lived. So far as it does this its life is not perfectly healthy; there are here signs, however remote, of disorganization, decay, and ultimate death; but still it lives, and even these misgrowths and malformations, the rejection of this good, the taking up into itself of that ill, all these errors are themselves the utterances and evidences of life. A dead language is the contrary of all this. It is dead, because books, and not now any generation of living men, are the guardians of it, and what they guard, they guard without change. Its course has been completely run, and it is now equally incapable of gaining and of losing. We may come to know it better; but in itself it is not, and never can be, other than it was when it ceased from the lips of men.

Our own is, of course, a living language still. It is therefore gaining and losing. It is a tree in which the vital sap is circulating yet, ascending from the roots into the branches; and as this works, new leaves are continually being put forth by it, old are dying and dropping away. I propose for the subject of my present lecture to consider some of the evidences of this life at work in it still. As I took for the subject of my first lecture the actual proportions in which the several elements of

our composite English are now found in it, and the service which they were severally called on to perform, so I shall consider in this the *sources* from which the English language has enriched its vocabulary, the *periods* at which it has made the chief additions to this, the *character* of the additions which at different periods it has made, and the *motives* which induced it to seek them.

I had occasion to mention in that lecture, and indeed I dwelt with some emphasis on the fact, that the core, the radical constitution of our language, is Anglo-Saxon; so that, composite or mingled as it must freely be allowed to be, it is only such in respect to words, not in respect of construction, inflexions, or generally its grammatical forms. These are all of one piece; and whatever of new has come in has been compelled to conform itself to these. The framework is English; only a part of the filling in is otherwise; and of this filling in, of these its comparatively more recent accessions, I now propose to speak.

The first great augmentation by foreign words of our Saxon vocabulary, setting aside those which the Danes brought us, was a consequence, although not an immediate one, of the battle of Hastings, and of the Norman domination which Duke William's victory established in our land. And here let me say in respect of that victory, in contradiction to the sentimental regrets of Thierry and others, and with the fullest acknowledgment of the immediate miseries which it entailed on the Saxon race, that it was really the making of England; a judgment, it is true, but a judgment and mercy in one.

God never showed more plainly that He had great things in store for the people which should occupy this English soil, than when He brought hither that aspiring Norman race. At the same time the actual interpenetration of our Anglo-Saxon with any large amount of French words did not find place till very considerably later than this event, however it was a consequence of it. Some French words we find very soon after; but in the main the two streams of language continued for a long while separate and apart, even as the two nations remained aloof, a conquering and a conquered, and neither forgetting the fact.

Time however softened the mutual antipathies. The Norman, after a while shut out from France, began more and more to feel that England was his home and sphere. The Saxon, recovering little by little from the extreme depression which had ensued on his defeat, became every day a more important element of the new English nation which was gradually forming from the coalition of the two races. His language partook of his elevation. It was no longer the badge of inferiority. French was no longer the only language in which a gentleman could speak, or a poet sing. At the same time the Saxon, now passing into the English language, required a vast addition to its vocabulary, if it were to serve all the needs of those who were willing to employ it now. How much was there of high culture, how many of the arts of life, of its refined pleasures, which had been strange to Saxon men, and had therefore found no utterance in

Saxon words. All this it was sought to supply from the French.

We shall not err, I think, if we assume the great period of the incoming of French words into the English language to have been when the Norman nobility were exchanging their own language for the English; and I should be disposed with Tyrwhitt to believe that there is much exaggeration in attributing the large influx of these into English to one man's influence, namely to Chaucer's.* Doubtless he did much; he fell in with and furthered a tendency which already prevailed. But to suppose that the majority of French vocables which he employed in his poems had never been employed before, had been hitherto unfamiliar to English ears, is to suppose that his poems must have presented to his contemporaries an absurd patchwork of two languages, and leaves it impossible to explain how he should at once have become the popular poet of our nation.

That Chaucer largely developed the language in this direction is indeed plain. We have only to compare his English with that of another great master of the tongue, his contemporary Wiclif, to

* Thus Alexander Gil, head-master of St. Paul's school, in his book, *Logonomia Anglica*, 1621, *Preface:* Huc usque peregrinæ voces in linguâ Anglicâ inauditæ. Tandem circa annum 1400 Galfridus Chaucerus, infausto omine, vocabulis Gallicis et Latinis poësin suam famosam reddidit. The whole passage, which is too long to quote, as indeed the whole book, is curious. Gil was an earnest advocate of phonetic spelling, and has adopted it in all his English quotations in this book.

perceive how much more his diction is saturated with French words than is that of the Reformer. We may note too that many which he and others employed, and as it were proposed for admission, were not finally allowed and received; so that no doubt they went beyond the needs of the language, and were here in excess.* At the same time this can be regarded as no condemnation of their attempt. It was only by actual experience that it could be proved whether the language wanted those words or not, whether it could absorb them into itself, and assimilate them with all that it already was and had; or did not require, and would therefore in due time reject and put them away. And what happened then will happen in every attempt to transplant on a large scale the words of one language into another. Some will take root; others will not, but after a longer or briefer period will wither and die. Thus I observe in Chaucer such French words as these, 'misericorde,' 'malure' (malheur), 'penible,' 'ayel' (aieul), 'tas,' 'gipon,' 'picrrie' (precious stones); none of

* We may observe exactly the same in Plautus; a multitude of Greek words are used by him, which the Latin language did not want, and therefore refused to take up; thus 'clepta,' 'zamia' (ζημία), 'danista,' 'harpagare,' 'apolactizare,' 'nauclerus,' 'strategus,' 'morologus,' 'phylaca,' 'malacus,' 'sycophantia,' 'euscheme' (εὐσχήμως), 'dulice' (δουλικῶς), [so 'scymnus' by Lucretius], none of which, I believe, are employed except by him; 'mastigias' and 'techna' appear also in Terence. Yet only experience could show that they were superfluous; and at the epoch of Latin literature in which Plautus lived, it was well done to put them on trial.

which, and Wiclif's 'creansur' (2 Kings iv. 1) as little, have permanently won a place in our tongue. For a long time 'mel,' used often by Sylvester, struggled hard for a place in the language side by side with honey; 'roy' side by side with king; this last quite obtained one in Scotch. It is curious to mark some of these French adoptions keeping their ground to a comparatively late day, and yet finally extruded: seeming to have taken firm root, they have yet withered away in the end. Thus has it been, for example, with 'egal' (Puttenham); with 'ouvert,' 'mot,' 'ecurie,' 'baston,' 'gite' (Holland); with 'rivage,' 'jouissance,' 'noblesse,' 'tort' (= wrong), 'accoil' (accueillir), 'sell' (= saddle), all occurring in Spenser; with 'to serr' (serrer), 'vive,' 'reglement,' used all by Bacon; and so with 'esperance,' 'orgillous' (orgueilleux), 'rondeur,' 'scrimer' (= fencer), all in Shakespeare; with 'amort' (this also in Shakespeare), and 'avie' (Holland). 'Maugre,' 'congie,' 'devoir,' 'dimes,' 'sans,' and 'bruit' used often in our Bible, were English once; when we employ them now, it is with the sense that we are using foreign words. The same is true of 'dulce,' 'aigredoulce' (= soursweet), of 'mur' for wall, of 'baine' for bath, of the verb 'to cass' (all in Holland), of 'volupty' (Sir Thomas Elyot), 'volunty' (Evelyn), 'medisance' (Montagu), 'petit' (South), 'aveugle,' 'colline' (both in *State Papers*), and 'eloign' (Hacket).*

* Let me here observe once for all that in adding the name of an author, which I shall often do, to a word, I do

We have seen when the great influx of French words took place—that is, from the time of the Conquest, although scantily and feebly at the first, to that of Chaucer. But with him our literature and language had made a burst, which they were not able to maintain. He has by Warton been well compared to some warm bright day in the very early spring, which seems to say that the winter is over and gone; but its promise is deceitful; the full bursting and blossoming of the spring-time are yet far off. That struggle with France which began so gloriously, but ended so disastrously, even with the loss of our whole ill-won dominion there, the savagery of our wars of the Roses, wars which were a legacy bequeathed to us by that unrighteous conquest, leave a huge gap in our literary history, nearly a century during which very little was done for the cultivation of our native tongue, during which it could have made few important accessions to its wealth.

The period however is notable as being that during which for the first time we received a large accession of Latin words. There was indeed already a small settlement of these, for the most part ecclesiastical, which had long since found their home in the bosom of the Anglo-Saxon itself, and had been entirely incorporated into it. The fact that we had received our Christianity from Rome,

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not mean to affirm the word in any way peculiar to him; although in some cases it may be so; but only to give one authority for its use.

and that Latin was the constant language of the Church, sufficiently explains the incoming of these. Such were 'monk,' 'bishop,' (I put them in their present shapes, and do not concern myself whether they were originally Greek or no; they reached *us* as Latin); 'provost,' 'minster,' 'cloister,' 'candle,' 'psalter,' 'mass,' and the names of certain foreign animals, as 'camel,' or plants or other productions, as 'pepper,' 'fig;' which are all, with slightly different orthography, Anglo-Saxon words. These, however, were entirely exceptional, and stood to the main body of the language not as the Romance element of it does now to the Gothic, one power over against another, but as the Spanish or Italian or Arabic words in it now stand to the whole present body of the language—and could not be affirmed to affect it more.

So soon however as French words were imported largely, as I have just observed, into the language, and were found to coalesce kindly with the native growths, this very speedily suggested, as indeed it alone rendered possible, the going straight to the Latin, and drawing directly from it; and thus in the hundred years which followed Chaucer a large amount of Latin found its way, if not into our speech, yet at all events into our books—words which were not brought *through* the French, for they are not, and have not at any time been, French, but yet words which would never have been introduced into English, if their way had not been prepared, if the French already domesticated among us, had not bridged over, as it were, the

gulf, that would have otherwise been too wide between them and the Saxon vocables of our tongue.

In this period, a period of great depression of the national spirit, we may trace the attempt at a pedantic latinization of English quite as clearly at work as at later periods, subsequent to the revival of learning. It was now that a crop of such words as 'facundious,' 'tenebrous,' 'solacious,' 'pulcritude,' 'consuetude' (all these occur in Hawes), with many more, long since rejected by the language, sprung up; while other words, good in themselves, and which have been since allowed, were yet employed in numbers quite out of proportion with the Saxon vocables with which they were mingled, and which they altogether overtopped and overshadowed. Chaucer's hearty English feeling, his thorough sympathy with the people, the fact that, scholar as he was, he was yet the poet not of books but of life, and drew his best inspiration from life, all this had kept him, in the main, clear of this fault. But in others it is very manifest. Thus I must esteem the diction of Lydgate, Hawes, and the other versifiers who filled up the period between Chaucer and Surrey, immensely inferior to Chaucer's; being all stuck over with long and often ill selected Latin words. The worst offenders in this line, as Campbell himself admits, were the Scotch poets of the fifteenth century. "The prevailing fault," he says, "of English diction, in the fifteenth century, is redundant ornament, and an affectation of

anglicising Latin words. In this pedantry and use of "aureate terms" the Scottish versifiers went even beyond their brethren of the south. . . . When they meant to be eloquent, they tore up words from the Latin, which never took root in the language, like children making a mock garden with flowers and branches stuck in the ground, which speedily wither."*

To few indeed is the wisdom and discretion given, certainly it was given to none of those, to bear themselves in this hazardous enterprise according to the rules laid down by Dryden; who in the following admirable passage declares the motives that induced him to seek for foreign words, and the considerations that guided him in their selection: "If sounding words are not of our growth and manufacture, who shall hinder me to import them from a foreign country? I carry not out the treasure of the nation which is never to return, but what I bring from Italy I spend in England. Here it remains and here it circulates, for, if the coin be good, it will pass from one hand to another. I trade both with the living and the dead, for the enrichment of our native language. We have enough in England to supply our necessity, but if we will have things of magnificence and splendour, we must get them by commerce. Poetry requires adornment, and that is not to be had from our old Teuton monosyllables; therefore if I find any elegant word in a

* *Essay on English Poetry*, p. 93.

classic author, I propose it to be naturalized by using it myself; and if the public approves of it, the bill passes. But every man cannot distinguish betwixt pedantry and poetry: every man therefore is not fit to innovate. Upon the whole matter a poet must first be certain that the word he would introduce is beautiful in the Latin; and is to consider in the next place whether it will agree with the English idiom: after this, he ought to take the opinion of judicious friends, such as are learned in both languages; and lastly, since no man is infallible, let him use this licence very sparingly; for if too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them."*

But this tendency to latinize our speech was likely to receive, and actually did receive, a new impulse from the revival of learning, and the familiar re-acquaintance with the great masterpieces of antient literature which went along with this revival. Happily another movement accompanied, or at least followed hard on this; a movement in England essentially national; and which stirred our people at far deeper depths of their moral and spiritual life than any mere revival of learning could have ever done; I refer, of course, to the Reformation. It was only among the Germanic nations of Europe, as has often been remarked, that the Reformation struck lasting roots; it found its strength therefore in the Teutonic

* *Dedication of the Translation of the Æneid.*

element of the national character, which also it in its turn further strengthened, purified, and called out. And thus, though Latin came in upon us now faster than ever, and in a certain measure also Greek, yet this was not without its redress and counterpoise, in the cotemporaneous unfolding of the more fundamentally popular side of the language. Popular preaching and discussion, the necessity of dealing with truths the most transcendant in a way to be understood not by scholars only, but by 'idiots' as well, all this served to evoke the native resources of our tongue; and thus the relative proportion between the one part of the language and the other was not dangerously disturbed, the balance was not destroyed; as it might well have been, if only the Humanists had been at work, and not the Reformers as well.

The revival of learning, which made itself first felt in Italy, extended to England, and was operative here, during the reigns of Henry the Eighth and his immediate successors. Having thus slightly anticipated in time, it afterwards ran exactly parallel with, the period during which our Reformation was working itself out. The epoch was in all respects one of immense mental and moral activity, and such never leave the language of a nation where they found it. Much is changed in it; much probably added; for the old garment of speech, which once served all needs, has grown too narrow, and serves them now no more. "Change in language is not, as in many natural products, continuous; it is not equable, but eminently by

fits and starts;" and when the foundations of the national mind are heaving under the power of some new truth, greater and more important changes will find place in fifty years than in two centuries of calmer or more stagnant existence. Thus the activities and energies which the Reformation awakened among us here, and I need not tell you that these reached far beyond the domain of our directly religious life, caused mighty alterations in the English tongue.*

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* We have notable evidence in some lines of Waller of the sense which in his time scholars had of the rapidity with which the language was changing under their hands. Looking back at what the last hundred years had wrought of alteration in it, and very naturally assuming that the next hundred would effect as much, he checked with misgivings such as these his own hope of immortality:

"Who can hope his lines should long
Last in a daily changing tongue?
While they are new, envy prevails,
And as that dies, our language fails.
. . . . . .
"Poets that lasting marble seek,
Must carve in Latin or in Greek:
We write in sand; our language grows,
And like the tide our work o'erflows."

Such were his misgivings as to the future, assuming that the rate of change would continue what it had been. How little they have been fulfilled, every one knows. In actual fact two centuries which have elapsed since he wrote, have hardly antiquated a word or a phrase in his poems. If we care very little for them now, this is to be explained by quite other causes—by the absence of all moral earnestness from them.

For example, the Reformation had its scholarly, we might say, its scholastic, as well as its popular, aspect. Add this fact to the fact of the revived interest in classical learning, and you will not wonder that a stream of Latin, now larger than ever, began to flow into our language. Thus Puttenham, writing in Queen Elizabeth's reign,* gives a long list of words which, as he declares, had been quite recently introduced into the language. Some of them are Greek, a few French and Italian, but very far the most are Latin. I will not give you his whole catalogue, but some specimens from it; it is difficult to understand concerning some of these, how the language should have managed to do without them so long; 'method,' 'methodical,' 'function,' 'numerous,' 'penetrate,' 'penetrable,' 'indignity,' 'savage,' 'scientific,' 'delineation,' 'dimension'—all which he notes to have recently come up; so too 'idiom,' 'significative,' 'compendious,' 'prolix,' 'figurative,' 'impression,' 'inveigle,' 'metrical.' All these he adduces with praise; others upon which he bestows equal commendation have not held their ground, as 'placation,' 'numerosity,' 'harmonical.' Of those neologies which he disallowed, he only anticipated in some cases, as in 'facundity,' 'implete,' 'attemptat' ('attentat'), the decision of a later day; other words which he condemned no less, as

* In his *Art of English Poesy*, London, 1589, republished in Haslewood's *Ancient Critical Essays upon English Poets and Poesy*, London, 1811, vol. i. pp. 122, 123.

'audacious,' 'compatible,' 'egregious,' have maintained their ground. These too have done the same; 'despicable,' 'destruction,' 'homicide,' 'obsequious,' 'ponderous,' 'portentous,' 'prodigious,' all of them by another writer a little earlier condemned as "inkhorn terms, smelling too much of the Latin."

It is curious to observe the "words of art," as he calls them, which Philemon Holland, a voluminous translator at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, counts it needful to explain in a sort of glossary which he appends to his translation of Pliny's *Natural History*.* One can hardly at the present day understand how any person who would care to consult the book at all would find any difficulty with words like the following, 'acrimony,' 'austere,' 'bulb,' 'consolidate,' 'debility,' 'dose,' 'ingredient,' 'opiate,' 'propitious,' 'symptom,' all which, however, as novelties he carefully explains. Some

* London, 1601. Besides this work Holland translated the whole of Plutarch's *Moralia*, the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, Livy, Suetonius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Camden's *Britannia*. His works make a part of the "library of dullness" in Pope's *Dunciad:*

"De Lyra there a dreadful front extends,
And here the groaning shelves *Philemon* bends"—

very unjustly; the authors whom he has translated are all more or less important, and his versions of them a mine of genuine idiomatic English, neglected by most of our lexicographers, wrought to a considerable extent and with eminent advantage by Richardson; yet capable, as it seems to me, of yielding much more than they hitherto have yielded.

of the words in his glossary, it is true, are harder and more technical than these; but a vast proportion of them present no greater difficulty than those which I have adduced.*

* And so too in French it is surprising to find of how late introduction are many words, which it seems as if the language could never have done without. 'Désintéressement,' 'exactitude,' 'sagacité,' 'bravoure,' were not introduced till late in the seventeenth century. 'Renaissance,' 'emportement,' 'sçavoir-faire,' 'indélébile,' 'désagrément' were all recent in 1675 (Bouhours); 'indévot,' 'intolérance,' 'impardonnable,' 'irréligieux,' were struggling into allowance at the end of the seventeenth century, and were not established till the beginning of the eighteenth. 'Insidieux' was invented by Malherbe; 'frivolité' does not appear in the earlier editions of the *Dictionary of the Academy*; the Abbé de St. Pierre was the first to employ 'bienfaisance,' the elder Balzac 'féliciter,' Sarrasin 'burlesque.' Mad. de Sevigné exclaims against her daughter for employing 'effervescence' in a letter (comment dites-vous cela, ma fille? Voilà un mot dont je n'avais jamais ouï parler). 'Demagogue' was first hazarded by Bossuet, and was counted so bold a novelty that it was long before any ventured to follow him in its use. Somewhat earlier Montaigne had introduced 'diversion' and 'enfantillage,' though not without being rebuked by cotemporaries on the score of the last. Desfontaines was the first who employed 'suicide;' Caron gave to the language 'avant-propos,' Ronsard 'avidité,' Joachim Dubellay 'patrie,' Denis Sauvage 'jurisconsulte,' Ménage 'gracieux' (at least so Voltaire affirms) and 'prosateur,' Desportes 'pudeur,' Chapelain 'urbanité,' and Etienne first brought in, apologizing at the same time for the boldness of it, 'analogie,' (si les oreilles françoises peuvent porter ce mot.) 'Préliber' (prælibare) is a word of our own day; and it was Charles Nodier who, if he did not coin, yet revived the obsolete 'simplesse.'—See Génin, *Variations du Langage Français*, pp. 308—319.

The period during which this naturalization of Latin words in the English Language was going actively forward, may be said to have continued till about the Restoration of Charles the Second. It first received a check from the coming up of French tastes, fashions, and habits of thought consequent on that event. The writers already formed before that period, such as Cudworth and Barrow, still continued to write their stately sentences, Latin in structure, and Latin in diction, but not so those of a younger generation. We may say of this influx of Latin that it left the language vastly more copious, with greatly enlarged capabilities, but perhaps somewhat burdened, and not always able to move gracefully under the weight of its new acquisitions; for as Dryden has somewhere truly said, it is easy enough to acquire foreign words, but to know what to do with them after you have acquired, is the difficulty.

It might have received indeed most serious injury, if *all* the words which the great writers of this second Latin period of our language employed, and so proposed as candidates for admission into it, had received the stamp of popular allowance. But happily it was not so; it was here, as it had been before with the French importations, and with the earlier Latin of Lydgate and Occleve. The re-active powers of the language, enabling it to throw off that which was foreign to it, did not fail to display themselves now, as they had done on former occasions. The number of unsuccessful candidates for admission into, and permanent natu-

ralization in, the language during this period, is enormous; and one may say that in almost all instances where the Alien Act has been enforced, the sentence of exclusion was a just one; it was such as the circumstances of the case abundantly bore out. Either the word was not idiomatic, or was not intelligible, or was not needed, or looked ill, or sounded ill, or some other valid reason existed against it. A lover of his native tongue will tremble to think what that tongue would have become, if all the vocables from the Latin and the Greek which were then introduced or endorsed by illustrious names, had been admitted on the strength of their recommendation; if 'torve' and 'tetric' (Fuller), 'cecity' (Hooker), 'fastide' and 'trutinate' (*State Papers*), 'immanity' (Shakespeare), 'insulse' and 'insulsity' (Milton, prose), 'scelestick' (Feltham), 'splendidious' (Drayton), 'pervicacy' (Baxter), 'stramineous,' 'ardelion' (Burton), 'lepid' and 'sufflaminate' (Barrow), 'facinorous' (Donne), 'immorigerous,' 'clancular,' 'ferity,' 'ustulation,' 'stultiloquy,' 'lipothymy' (λειποθυμία), 'hyperaspist' (all in Jeremy Taylor), if 'mulierosity,' 'subsannation,' 'coaxation,' 'ludibundness,' 'delinition,' 'septemfluous,' 'medioxumous,' 'mirificent,' 'palmiferous' (all in Henry More), 'pauciloquy' and 'multiloquy' (Beaumont, *Psyche*); if 'dyscolous' (Foxe), 'ataraxy' (Allestree), 'moliminously' (Cudworth), 'luciferously' (Sir Thomas Browne), 'immarcescible' (Bishop Hall), 'exility,' 'spinosity,' 'incolumity,' 'solertiousness,' 'lucripetous,' 'inopious,' 'eluctate,'

'eximious' (all in Hacket), 'arride' (ridiculed by Ben Jonson), with the hundreds of other words like these, and even more monstrous than are some of these, not to speak of such Italian as 'leggiadrous' (a favourite word in Beaumont's *Psyche*), 'amorevolous' (Hacket), had not been rejected and disallowed by the true instinct of the national mind.

A great many too *were* allowed and adopted, but not exactly in the shape in which they first were introduced among us; they were made to drop their foreign termination, or otherwise their foreign appearance, to conform themselves to English ways, and only so were finally incorporated into the great family of English words.* Thus of Greek words we have the following: 'pyramis' and 'pyramides,' forms often employed by Shakespeare, became 'pyramid' and 'pyramids;' 'dosis' (Bacon) 'dose;' 'distichon' (Holland) 'distich;' 'hemistichion' (North) 'hemistich;' 'apogæon' (Fairfax) and 'apogeum' (Browne) 'apogee;' 'sumphonia' (Lodge) 'symphony;' 'prototypon' (Jackson) 'prototype;' 'synonymon' (Jeremy Taylor) or 'synonymum' (Hacket), and 'synonyma' (Milton, prose), became severally 'synonym' and 'synonyms;' 'syntaxis' (Fuller) became 'syntax;' 'extasis' (Burton) 'ecstasy;' 'parallelogrammon' (Holland) 'parallelogram;' 'programma'

* J. Grimm (*Wörterbuch*, p. xxvi.): Fällt von ungefähr ein fremdes wort in den brunnen einer sprache, so wird es so lange darin umgetrieben, bis es ihre farbe annimmt, und seiner fremden art zum trotze wie ein heimisches aussieht.

(Warton) 'program;' 'epithcton' (Cowell) 'epithet;' 'epocha' (South) 'epoch;' 'biographia' (Dryden) 'biography;' 'apostata' (Massinger) 'apostate;' 'despota' (Fox) 'despot;' 'misanthropos' (Shakespeare) if 'misanthropi' (Bacon) 'misanthrope;' 'psalterion' (North) 'psaltery;' 'chasma' (Henry More) 'chasm;' 'idioma' and 'prosodia' (both in Daniel, prose) 'idiom' and 'prosody;' 'energia,' 'energy,' and 'Sibylla,' 'Sibyl' (both in Sidney); 'zoophyton' (Henry More) 'zoophyte;' 'enthousiasmos' (Sylvester) 'enthusiasm;' 'phantasma' (Donne) 'phantasm;' 'magnes' (Gabriel Harvey) 'magnet;' 'cynosura' (Donne) 'cynosure;' 'galaxias' (Fox) 'galaxy;' 'heros' (Henry More) 'hero;' 'epitaphy' (Hawes) 'epitaph.'

The same process has gone on in a multitude of Latin words, which testify by their terminations that they were, and were felt to be, Latin at their first employment; though now they are such no longer. Thus Bacon uses generally, I know not whether always, 'insecta' for 'insects;' and 'chylus' for 'chyle;' Bishop Andrews 'nardus' for 'nard;' Spenser 'zephyrus,' and not 'zephyr;' so 'interstitium' (Fuller) preceded 'interstice;' 'philtrum' (Culverwell) 'philtre;' 'expansum' (Jeremy Taylor) 'expanse;' 'preludium' (Beaumont, *Psyche*), 'prelude;' 'precipitium' (Coryat) 'precipice;' 'aconitum' (Shakespeare) 'aconite;' 'balsamum' (Webster) 'balsam;' 'heliotropium' (Holland) 'heliotrope;' 'helleborum' (North) 'hellebore;' 'vehiculum' (Howe) 'vehicle;' 'trochæus' and 'spondæus' (Holland) 'trochee' and

'spondee;' and 'machina' (Henry More) 'machine.' We have 'intervalla,' not 'intervals,' in Chillingworth; 'postulata,' not 'postulates,' in Swift; 'archiva,' not 'archives,' in Baxter; 'demagogi,' not 'demagogues,' in Hacket; 'vestigium,' not 'vestige,' in Culverwell; 'pantomimus' in Lord Bacon for 'pantomime;' 'mystagogus' for 'mystagogue,' in Jackson; 'atomi' in Lord Brooke for 'atoms;' 'ædilis' (North) went before 'ædile;' 'effigies' and 'statua' (both in Shakespeare) before 'effigy' and 'statue;' 'abyssus' (Jackson) before 'abyss;' 'vestibulum' (Howe) before 'vestibule;' 'symbolum' (Hammond) before 'symbol;' 'spectrum' (Burton) before 'spectre;' while only after a while 'quære' gave place to 'query;' 'audite' (Hacket) to 'audit;' 'plaudite' (Henry More) to 'plaudit;' and the low Latin 'mummia' (Webster) became 'mummy.' The widely extended change of such words as 'innocency,' 'indolency,' 'temperancy,' and the large family of words with the same termination, into 'innocence,' 'indolence,' 'temperance,' and the like, can only be regarded as part of the same process of entire naturalization.

The plural very often tells the secret of a word, and of the light in which it is regarded by those who employ it, when the singular, being less capable of modification, would have failed to do so; thus when Holland writes 'phalanges,' 'bisontes,' 'ideæ,' it is clear that 'phalanx,' 'bison,' 'idea,' were still Greek words for him; as 'dogma' was for Hammond, when he made its

plural not 'dogmas,' but 'dogmata;'* and when Spenser uses 'heroës' as a trisyllable, it plainly is not yet thoroughly English for him.† 'Cento' is not English, but a Latin word used in English, so long as it makes its plural not 'centos,' but 'centones,' as in the old anonymous translation of Augustin's *City of God;* and 'specimen,' while it makes its plural 'specimina' (Howe). Pope making, as he does, 'satellites' a quadrisyllable in the line

"Why Jove's *satellites* are less than Jove,"

must have felt that he was still dealing with it as Latin; just as 'terminus,' a word which the necessities of railways have introduced among us, will not be truly naturalized till we use 'terminuses,' and not 'termini' for its plural; nor 'phenomenon,' till we have renounced 'phenomena.' Sometimes it has been found convenient to retain both plurals, that formed according to the laws of the classical language, and that formed according to the laws of our own, only employing them in different senses; thus is it with 'indices' and 'indexes,' 'genii' and 'geniuses.'

The same process has gone on with words from other languages, as from the Italian and the

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* Have we here an explanation of the 'battalia' of Jeremy Taylor and others? Did they, without reflecting on the matter, regard 'battalion' as a word with a Greek neuter termination? It is difficult to think they should have done so; yet more difficult to suggest any other explanation.

† "And old heroës, which their world did daunt."
Sonnet on Scanderbeg.

Spanish; thus 'bandetto' (Shakespeare), 'bandito' (Jeremy Taylor), becomes 'bandit;' 'ruffiano' (Coryat) 'ruffian;' 'concerto,' 'concert;' 'busto' (Lord Chesterfield) 'bust;' 'caricatura' (Sir Thomas Browne) 'caricature;' 'princessa' (Hacket) 'princess;' 'scaramucha' (Dryden) 'scaramouch;' 'pedanteria' (Sidney) 'pedantry;' 'impresa' 'impress;' 'caprichio' (Shakespeare) becomes first 'caprich' (Butler), then 'caprice;' 'duello' (Shakespeare) 'duel;' 'alligarta' (Ben Jonson)' alligator;' 'parroquito' (Webster) 'parroquet;' 'scalada' (Heylin) or 'escalado' (Holland) 'escalade;' 'granada' (Hacket) 'grenade;' 'parada' (J. Taylor) 'parade;' 'emboscado' (Holland) 'stoccado,' 'barricado,' 'renegado,' 'hurricano' (all in Shakespeare), 'brocado' (Hackluyt), 'palissado' (Howell), drop their foreign terminations, and severally become 'ambuscade,' 'stockade,' 'barricade,' 'renegade,' 'hurricane,' 'brocade,' 'palisade;' 'croisado' in like manner (Bacon) becomes first 'croisade' (Jortin), and then 'crusade;' 'quina-quina' or 'quinquina,' 'quinine.' Other slight modifications of spelling, not in the termination, but in the body of a word, will indicate in like manner its more entire incorporation into the English language. Thus 'shash,' a Turkish word, becomes 'sash;' 'colone' (Burton) 'clown;' restoration' was at first spelt 'rest*au*ration;' and so long as 'vicinage' was spelt 'voisinage'* (San-

* Skinner (*Etymologicon*, 1671) protests against the word altogether, as purely French, and having no right to be considered English at all.

as 'dogma' was for Hammond, when he made its

derson), 'mirror' 'miroir' (Fuller), 'recoil' 'recule,' or 'career' 'carriere' (both by Holland), they could scarcely be considered those purely English words which now they are.*

Here and there even at this comparatively late period of the language awkward foreign words will be recast in a more thoroughly English mould; 'chirurgeon' will become 'surgeon;' 'hemorrhoid' 'emerod;' 'squinancy' will become first 'squinzey' (Jeremy Taylor), and then 'quinsey;' 'porkpisce' (Spenser), that is sea-hog, or more accurately hogfish, will be 'porpesse,' and then 'porpoise,' as it is now. In other words the attempt will be made, but it will be now too late to be attended with success. 'Physiognomy' will not give place to 'visnomy,' however Spenser and Shakespeare employ this briefer form; nor 'hippopotamus' to 'hippodame,' even at Spenser's bidding. In like manner the attempt to naturalize 'avant-courier' in the shape of 'vancurrier' has failed. Other words also we meet which have finally refused to take a more popular form, although such was once more or less current; or, if this is too much to say of all, yet hazarded by good authors. Thus Holland wrote 'cirque,' but we 'circus;' 'ccnse,' but we 'census;' 'interreign,' but we 'interregnum;' Sylvester 'cest,'

* It is curious how effectually the nationality of a word may by these slight alterations in spelling be disguised. I have met an excellent French and English scholar, to whom it was quite a surprise to learn that 'redingote' was 'riding-coat.'

but we 'cestus;' 'quirry,' but we 'equerry;' 'colosse,' but we still 'colossus;' Golding 'ure,' but we 'urus;' 'metropole,' but we 'metropolis;' Dampier 'volcan,' but this has not superseded 'volcano;' nor 'pagod' (Pope) 'pagoda;' nor 'skelet' (Holland) 'skeleton;' nor 'stimule' (Stubbs) 'stimulus.' Bolingbroke wrote 'exode,' but we hold fast to 'exodus;' Burton 'funge,' but we 'fungus;' Henry More 'enigm,' but we 'enigma;' 'analyse,' but we 'analysis.' 'Superfice' (Dryden) has not put 'superficies,' nor 'sacrary' (Hacket) 'sacrarium,' nor 'limbeck' 'alembic,' out of use. Chaucer's 'potecary' has given way to a more Greek formation 'apothecary.' Yet these and the like must be regarded quite as exceptions; the tendency of things is altogether the other way.

Looking at this process of the reception of foreign words, with their after assimilation in feature to our own, we may trace, as was to be expected, a certain conformity between the genius of our institutions and that of our language. It is the very character of our institutions to repel none, but rather to afford a shelter and a refuge to all, from whatever quarter they come; and after a longer or shorter while all the strangers and incomers have been incorporated into the English nation, within one or two generations have forgotten that they were ever ought else than members of it, have retained no other reminiscence of their foreign extraction than some slight difference of name, and that often disappearing or having

disappeared. Exactly so has it been with the English language. No language has shown itself less exclusive; none has stood less upon niceties; none has thrown open its arms wider, with a fuller confidence, a confidence justified by experience, that it could make truly its own, assimilate and subdue to itself, whatever it received into its bosom; and in none has this experiment in a larger number of instances been successfully carried out.

Such are the two great enlargements from without of our vocabulary. All other are minor and subordinate. Thus the introduction of French tastes by Charles the Second and his courtiers returning from exile, to which I have just adverted, though it rather modified the structure of our sentences than the materials of our vocabulary, gave us some new words. In one of Dryden's plays, *Marriage à la Mode*, a lady full of affectation is introduced, who is always employing French idioms in preference to English, French words rather than native. It is not a little curious that of these, thus put into her mouth to render her ridiculous, not a few are excellent English now, and have nothing far-sought or affected about them: for so it frequently proves that what is laughed at in the beginning, is by all admitted and allowed at the last. For example, to speak of a person being in the 'good graces' of another has nothing in it ridiculous now; the words 'repartee,' 'embarrass,' 'chagrin,' 'grimace,' do

not sound novel and affected now as they all must plainly have done at the time when Dryden wrote. 'Fougue' and 'fraischeur,' which he himself employed—being it is true, no frequent offender in this way—have not been justified by the same success.

Nor indeed can it be said that this adoption and naturalization of foreign words ever ceases in a language. There are periods, as we have seen, when this goes forward much more largely than at others; when a language throws open, as it were, its doors, and welcomes strangers with an especial freedom; but there is never a time, when one by one these foreigners and strangers are not slipping into it. We do not for the most part observe the fact, at least not while it is actually doing. Time, the greatest of all innovators, manages his innovations so dexterously, spreads them over such vast periods, and therefore brings them about so gradually, that often, while effecting the mightiest changes, we have no suspicion that he is effecting any at all. Thus how imperceptible are the steps by which a foreign word is admitted into the full rights of an English one; the process of its incoming often eluding our notice altogether. There are numerous Greek words, for example, which, quite unchanged in form, have in one way or another ended in finding a home and acceptance among us. We may in almost every instance trace step by step the naturalization of one of these; and the manner of this singularly confirms what has just been said.

We can note it spelt for a while in Greek letters, and avowedly employed as a Greek and not an English vocable; then after it had thus obtained a certain allowance among us, and become not altogether unfamiliar, we note it exchanging its Greek for English letters, and finally obtaining recognition as a word which, however drawn from a foreign source, is yet itself English. Thus 'acme,' 'apotheosis,' 'criterion,' 'chrysalis,' 'encyclopedia,' 'metropolis,' 'opthalmia,' 'pathos,' 'phenomena,' are all now English words, while yet South with many others always wrote ἀκμή, Jeremy Taylor ἀποθέωσις and κριτήριον, Henry More χρυσαλίς, Ben Jonson speaks of 'the knowledge of the liberal arts, which the Greeks call ἐγκυκλοπαδείαν,* Culverwell wrote μητρόπολις and ὀφθαλμία, Preston, φαινόμενα — Sylvester ascribes to Baxter, not 'pathos,' but πάθος.† Ηθος is a word at the present moment preparing for a like passage from Greek characters to English, and certainly before long will be acknowledged as an English word. The only cause which has hindered this for some time past is the misgiving whether it will not be read 'ĕthos,'

* He is not indeed perfectly accurate in this statement, for the Greeks spoke of ἐν κύκλῳ παιδεία and ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, but had no such composite word as ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία. We gather however from these expressions, as from Lord Bacon's using the term 'circle-learning' (='orbis doctrinæ,' Quintilian), that 'encyclopædia' did not exist in their time.

† See the passages quoted in my paper, *On some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries*, p. 38.

and not 'ēthos,' and thus not be the word intended.

Let us trace a like process in some French word, which is at this moment becoming English. I know no better example than the French 'prestige' will afford. 'Prestige' has manifestly no equivalent in our own language; it expresses something which no single word in English, which only a long circumlocution, could express; namely, that magic influence on others, which past successes, as the pledge and promise of future ones, breed. The word has thus naturally come to be of very frequent use by good English writers; for they do not feel that in employing it they are passing by as good or a better word of their own. At first all used it avowedly as French, writing it in italics to indicate this. At the present moment some write it so still, some do not; some, that is, regard it still as foreign, others consider that it has now become English, and obtained a settlement among us.* Little by little the number of those who write it in italics will become fewer and fewer, till they cease altogether. It will then only need that the accent should be shifted, in obedience to the tendencies of the English lan-

* We may see the same progress in Greek words which were being incorporated in the Latin. Thus Cicero writes *ἀντίποδες* (*Acad.* ii. 39, 123), but Seneca (*Ep.* 122), 'antipodes;' that is, the word for Cicero was still Greek, while in the period that elapsed between him and Seneca, it had become Latin: so too Cicero wrote *εἴδωλον*, the Younger Pliny 'idolon,' and Tertullian 'idolum.'

guage, as far back in the word as it will go, that instead of 'prestíge,' it should be pronounced 'préstige' even as within these few years instead of 'depót' we have learned to say 'dépot,' and its naturalization will be complete. I have little doubt that in twenty years it will be so pronounced by the majority of well educated Englishmen,—some pronounce it so already,—and that our present pronunciation will pass away in the same manner as 'oble*e*ge,' once universal, has past away, and everywhere given place to 'obl*i*ge.'*

Let me here observe in passing, that the process of throwing the accent of a word back, by way of completing its naturalization, is one which we may note constantly going forward in our language. Thus, while Chaucer accentuates sometimes 'natúre,' he also accentuates elsewhere 'náture,' while sometimes 'virtúe,' at other times 'vírtue.' 'Prostrate' 'adverse,' 'aspect, 'process,' 'insult,' 'impulse,' 'pretext,' 'contrite,' 'uproar,' 'contest,' had all their accent on the last syllable in Milton; they have it now on the first; 'cháracter' was 'charácter' with Spenser; 'théatre' was 'theátre' with Sylvester; while 'acádemy' was accented 'academy' by Cowley and Butler.† 'Essay' was 'essáy' with Dryden and with Pope;

* See in Coleridge's *Table Talk*, p. 3, the amusing story of John Kemble's stately correction of the Prince of Wales for adhering to the earlier pronunciation, 'oble*e*ge,—"It will become your royal mouth better to say obl*i*ge."

† "In this great *academy* of mankind."
Butler, *To the Memory of Du Val.*

the first closes an heroic line with the word; Pope does the same with 'barrier'* and 'effort;' therefore pronounced 'barríer,' 'effórt,' by him.

There are not a few other French words which like 'prestige' are at this moment hovering on the verge of English, hardly knowing whether they shall become such, or no. Such are 'ennui,' 'exploitation,' 'verve,' 'persiflage,' 'badinage,' 'chicane,' 'finesse,' and others; all of them often employed by us,—and it is out of such frequent employment that adoption proceeds,—because expressing shades of meaning not expressed by any words of our own. Some of these, we may confidently anticipate, will complete their naturalization; others will after a time retreat again, and become for us avowedly French. 'Solidarity,' a word which we owe to the French Communists, and which signifies a fellowship in gain and loss, in honour and dishonour, in victory and defeat, a being, so to speak, all in the same bottom, is so convenient that, unattractive as confessedly it is, it will be in vain to struggle against its reception. The newspapers already have it, and books will not long exclude it; not to say that it has established itself in German, and probably in other European languages as well.

Greek and Latin words also we still continue to adopt, although now no longer in troops and companies, but only one by one. With the lively interest which always has been felt in classical

* "'Twixt that and reason what a nice *barrier*."

studies among us, and which will continue to be felt, so long as any greatness and nobleness survive in our land, it must needs be that accessions from these quarters would never cease altogether. I do not refer here to purely scientific terms; these, so long as they continue such, and do not pass beyond the threshold of the science or sciences for the use of which they were invented, being never heard on the lips, or employed in the writings, of any but the cultivators of these sciences, have no right to be properly called words at all. They are a kind of shorthand of the science, or algebraic notation; and will not find place in a dictionary of the language, constructed upon true principles, but rather in a technical dictionary apart by themselves. Of these, compelled by the advances of physical science, we have coined multitudes out of number in these later times, fashioning them mainly from the Greek, no other language within our reach yielding itself at all so easily to our needs.

Of non-scientific words, both Greek and Latin, some have made their way among us quite in these latter times. Burke in the House of Commons is said to have been the first who employed the word 'inimical.' He also launched the verb 'to spheterize' in the sense of to appropriate or make one's own; but this without success. Others have been more fortunate; 'æsthetic' we have got indeed *through* the Germans, but *from* the Greeks. Tennyson has given allowance to 'æon;' and 'myth' is a deposit which wide and far-reach-

ing controversies have left in the popular language. 'Photography' is an example of what I was just now speaking of—namely, a scientific word which has travelled beyond the limits of the science which it designates, and which gave it birth. 'Stereotype' is another word of the same character. It was invented—not the thing, but the word,—by Didot not very long since; but it is now absorbed into healthy general circulation, being current in a secondary and figurative sense. Ruskin has given to 'ornamentation' the sanction and authority of hisname. 'Normal' and 'abnormal;' not quite so new, are yet of recent introduction into the language.

When we consider the near affinity between the English and German languages, which, if not sisters, may at least be regarded as first cousins, it is somewhat remarkable that almost since the day when they parted company, each to fulfil its own destiny, there has been little further commerce between them in the matter of giving or taking. At any rate adoptions on our part from the German have been till within this period extremely rare. 'Crikesman' (Kriegsmann) and 'brandschat' (Brandschatz), with some other German words common enough in the *State Papers* of the sixteenth century, found no permanent place in the language. The explanation lies in the fact that the literary activity of Germany did not begin till very late, nor our interest in it till later still, not indeed till the beginning of the present century. Yet 'plunder,' as I have men-

tioned elsewhere, was brought back from Germany about the beginning of our Civil Wars, by the soldiers who had served under Gustavus Adolphus and his captains. And 'trigger,' written 'tricker' in *Hudibras* is manifestly the German 'drücker,' though none of our Dictionaries have marked it as such; a word first appearing at the same period, it may have reached us through the same channel. 'Iceberg' (eisberg) also we must have taken whole from the German, as, had we constructed the word for ourselves, we should have made it not 'ice-*berg*,' but 'ice-*mountain*.' I have not found it in our earlier voyagers, often as they speak of the 'icefield,' which yet is not exactly the same thing. An English 'swindler' is not exactly a German 'schwindler,' yet the notion of the 'nebulo,' though more latent in the German, is common to both; and we must have drawn the word from Germany (it is not an old one in our tongue) during the course of the last century. If '*life*-guard' was originally, as Richardson suggests, '*leib*-garde,' or '*body*-guard,' and from that transformed, by the determination of Englishmen to make it significant in English, into '*life*-guard,' or guard defending the *life* of the sovereign, this will be another word from the same quarter. Yet I have my doubts; 'leibgarde' would scarcely have found its way hither before the accession of the House of Hanover, or at any rate before the arrival of Dutch William with his memorable guards; while 'lifeguard,' in its present shape, is certainly an older word in the language; we hear

often of the 'lifeguards' in our Civil Wars; as witness too Fuller's words: "The Cherethites were a kind of *lifegard* to king David."*

Of late our German importations have been somewhat more numerous. With several German compound words we have been in recent times so well pleased, that we must needs adopt them into English, or imitate them in it. We have not always been very happy in those which we have selected for imitation or adoption. Thus we might have been satisfied with 'manual,' and not called back from its nine hundred years of oblivion that ugly and unnecessary word 'handbook.' And now we are threatened with 'word-building,' as I see a book announced under the title of "Latin *word-building*," and, much worse than this, with 'stand-point.' 'Einseitig' (itself a modern word, if I mistake not, or at any rate modern in its secondary application) has not, indeed, been adopted, but is evidently the pattern on which we have formed 'onesided'—a word to which a few years ago something of affectation was attached; so that any one who employed it at once gave evidence that he was more or less a dealer in German wares; it has however its manifest conveniences, and will hold its ground. 'Fatherland' (Vaterland) on the contrary will scarcely establish itself among us, the note of affectation will continue to cleave to it, and we shall go on contented with 'native country' to the end. The most suc-

* *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, 1650, p. 217.

cessful of these compounded words, borrowed recently from the German, is 'folk-lore,' and the substitution of this for popular superstitions, must be esteemed, I think, an unquestionable gain.

To speak now of other sources from which the new words of a language are derived. Of course the period when absolutely new roots are generated will have past away, long before men begin by a reflective act to take any notice of processes going forward in the language which they speak. This pure productive energy, creative we might call it, belongs only to the earlier stages of a nation's existence,—to times quite out of the ken of history. It is only from materials already existing either in its own bosom, or in the bosom of other languages, that it can enrich itself in the later, or historical stages of its life.

And first, it can bring its own words into new combinations; it can join two, and sometimes even more than two, of the words which it already has, and form out of them a new one. Much more is wanted here than merely to attach two or more words to one another by a hyphen; this is not to make a new word: they must really coalesce and grow together. Different languages, and even the same language at different stages of its existence, will possess this power of forming new words by the combination of old in very different degrees. The eminent felicity of the Greek in this respect has been always acknowledged. "The joints of her compounded words," says

Fuller, "are so naturally oiled, that they run nimbly on the tongue, which makes them though long, never tedious, because significant."* Sir Philip Sidney boasts of the capability of our English language in this respect—that "it is particularly happy in the composition of two or three

* *Holy State*, b. 2, c. 6. There was a time when the Latin promised to display, if not an equal, yet not a very inferior, freedom in this forming of new words by the happy marriage of old. But in this, as in so many respects, it seemed possessed at the period of its highest culture with a timidity, which caused it voluntarily to abdicate many of its own powers. Where do we find in the Augustan period of the language so grand a pair of epithets as these, occurring as they do in a single line of Catullus: Ubi cerva *silvicultrix*, ubi aper *nemorivagus?* or again, as his 'fluentisonus?' Virgil's vitisator (*Æn.* 7, 179) is not his own, but derived from one of the earlier poets. Nay, the language did not even retain those compound epithets which it once had formed, but was content to let numbers of them drop: 'parcipromus,' 'turpilucricupidus,' and many more, do not extend beyond Plautus. On this matter Quintilian observes (i. 5. 70): Res tota magis Græcos decet, nobis minus succedit; nec id fieri naturâ puto, sed alienis favemus; ideoque cum κυρτοὺχενα mirati sumus, *incurvicervicum* vix a risu defendimus. Elsewhere he complains, though not with reference to compound epithets, of the little *generative* power which existed in the Latin language, that its continual losses were compensated by no equivalent gains (viii. 6. 32): Deinde, tanquam consummata sint omnia, nihil generare audemus ipsi, quum multa quotidie ab antiquis ficta moriantur. Notwithstanding this complaint, it must be owned that the silver age of the language, which sought to recover, and did recover to some extent the abdicated energies of its earlier times, reasserted among other powers that of combining words, with a certain measure of success.

words together, near equal to the Greek." No one has done more than Milton to justify this praise, or to make manifest what may be effected by this marriage of words. Many of his compound epithets, as 'golden-tressed,' 'tinsel-slippered,' 'coral-paven,' 'flowry-kirtled,' 'violet-embroidered,' 'vermeil-tinctured,' are themselves poems in miniature. Not unworthy to be set beside these are Sylvester's "*opal-coloured* morn," Drayton's "*silver-sanded* shore," and perhaps Marlowe's "*golden-fingered* Ind."

Our modern inventions in the same kind are for the most part very inferior: they could hardly fail to be so, seeing that the formative, plastic powers of a language are always waning and diminishing more and more. It may be, and indeed is, gaining in other respects, but in this it is losing; and thus it is not strange if its later births in this kind are less successful than its earlier. Among the poets of our own time Shelley has done more than any other to assert for the language that it has not quite renounced this power; while among writers of prose in these later days Jeremy Bentham has been at once one of the boldest, but at the same time one of the most unfortunate, of those who have issued this money from their mint. Still we ought not to forget, while we divert ourselves with the strange and formless progeny of his brain, that we owe 'international' to him—a word at once so convenient and supplying so real a need, that it was and with manifest advantage at once adopted by all.

Another way in which languages increase their stock of vocables is by the forming of new words according to the analogy of formations, which in seemingly parallel cases have been already allowed. Thus long since upon certain substantives such as 'congregation,' 'convention,' were formed their adjectives, 'congregational,' 'conventional;' yet these also at a comparatively modern period; 'congregational' first rising up in the Assembly of Divines, or during the time of the Commonwealth.* These having found admission into the language, it is attempted to repeat the process in the case of other words with the same ending. I confess the effect is often exceedingly disagreeable. We are now pretty well used to 'educational,' and the word is sometimes serviceable enough; but I can perfectly remember when some twenty years ago an "*Educational* Magazine" was started, the first impression on one's mind was, that a work having to do with education should not thus bear upon its front an offensive, or to say the best, a very dubious novelty in the English language. These adjectives are now multiplying fast. We have 'inflexional,' 'seasonal,' 'denominational,' and, not content with this, in dissenting magazines at least, the monstrous birth, 'denominationalism;' 'emotional' is creeping into books, 'sensational,' and others as well; so that it is hard to say where this influx will stop, or whether all our words with

* *Collection of Scarce Tracts*, edited by Sir W. Scott, vol. vii. p. 91.

this termination will not finally generate an adjective. Convenient as you may sometimes find these, I would yet certainly counsel you to abstain from all but the perfectly well recognised formations of this kind. There may be cases of exception; but for the most part Pope's advice is good, as certainly it is safe, that we be not among the last to use a word which is going out, nor among the first to employ one that is coming in.

'Starvation' is another word of comparatively recent introduction, formed in like manner on the model of preceding formations of an apparently similar character—its first formers, indeed, not observing that they were putting a Latin termination to a Saxon word. Some have supposed it to have reached us from America. It has not however travelled from so great a distance, being a stranger indeed, yet not from beyond the Atlantic, but only from beyond the Tweed. It is an old Scottish word, but unknown in England, till used by Mr. Dundas, the first Viscount Melville, in an American debate in 1775. That it then jarred strangely on English ears is evident from the nickname, "*Starvation* Dundas," which in consequence he obtained.*

Again, languages enrich themselves, our own has done so, by recovering treasures which for a while

* See *Letters of Horace Walpole and Mann*, vol. ii. p. 396, quoted in *Notes and Queries*, No. 225; and another proof of the novelty of the word in Pegge's *Anecdotes of the English Language*, 1814, p. 38.

had been lost by them or foregone. I do not mean that all which drops out of use *is* loss; there are words which it is gain to be rid of; which it would be folly to wish to revive; of which Dryden, setting himself against an extravagant zeal in this direction, says in an ungracious comparison—they do "not deserve this redemption, any more than the crowds of men who daily die, or are slain for sixpence in a battle, merit to be restored to life, if a wish could revive them."* There are others, however, which it is a real gain to draw back again from the temporary oblivion which had overtaken them; and this process of their setting and rising again, or of what, to use another image, we might call their suspended animation, is not so unfrequent as at first might be supposed.

You may perhaps remember that Horace, tracing in a few memorable lines the history of words, while he notes that many once current have now dropped out of use, does not therefore count that of necessity their race is for ever run; on the contrary he confidently anticipates a *palingenesy* for many among them;† and I am convinced that there has been such in the case of our English words to a far greater extent than we are generally aware. Words slip almost or quite as imperceptibly back into use as they once slipped out of it. Let me produce a few facts in evidence of this. In

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* Postscript to his *Translation of the Æneid.*

† Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere.
De A. P. 46—72; cf. *Ep.* 2. 2. 115.

the cotemporary gloss which an anonymous friend of Spenser's furnished to his *Shepherd's Calendar*, first published in 1579, "for the exposition of old words," as he declares, he thinks it expedient to include in his list, the following, 'dapper,' 'scathe,' 'askance,' 'sere,' 'embellish,' 'bevy,' 'forestall,' 'fain,' with not a few others quite as familiar as these. In Speght's *Chaucer* (1667), there is a long list of "old and obscure words in Chaucer explained;" these "old and obscure words" including 'anthem,' 'blithe,' 'bland,' 'chapelet,' 'carol, 'deluge,' 'franchise,' 'illusion,' 'problem,' 'recreant,' 'sphere,' 'tissue,' 'transcend,' with very many easier than these. In Skinner's *Etymologicon* (1671), there is another such list of obsolete words,* and among these he includes 'to dovetail,' 'to interlace,' 'elvish,' 'encombred,' 'phantom' (fantome), 'gawd,' 'glare,' 'masquerade' (mascarade), 'oriental,' 'plumage,' 'pummel' (pomell), and 'stew,' that is, for fish. Who will say of the verb 'to hallow' that it is now even obsolescent? and yet Wallis two hundred years ago observed—"it has almost gone out of use" (fere desuevit). It would be difficult to find an example of the verb, 'to advocate,' between Milton and Burke. Franklin, a close observer in such matters, as he was himself an admirable master of English style, considered the word to have

* *Etymologicon vocum omnium antiquarum quæ usque a Wilhelmo Victore invaluerunt, et jam ante parentum ætatem in usu esse desierunt.*

sprung up during his own residence in Europe. In this indeed he was mistaken; it had only during this period revived. Johnson says of 'jeopardy' that it is a "word not now in use;" which certainly is not any longer true.*

I am persuaded that in facility of being understood, Chaucer is not merely as near, but much nearer, to us than Dryden and his cotemporaries felt him to be to them. He and the writers of his time make exactly the same sort of complaints, only in still stronger language, about his archaic phraseology and the obscurities which it involves, that are made at the present day. Thus in the *Preface* to his *Tales from Chaucer*, having quoted some not very difficult lines from the earlier poet whom he was modernizing, he proceeds: "You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete that his sense is scarce to be understood." Nor was it merely thus with respect of Chaucer. These wits and poets of the Court of Charles the Second were conscious of a greater gulf between themselves and the Elizabethan æra, separated from them by little more than fifty years, than any of which *we* are aware, separated

* In like manner La Bruyère, in his *Caractères*, c. 14, laments the extinction of a large number of French words which he names. At least half of these have now free course in the language, as 'valeureux,' 'haineux,' 'peineux,' 'fructueux,' 'mensonger,' 'coutumier,' 'vantard,' 'courtois,' 'jovial,' 'fétoyer,' 'larmoyer,' 'verdoyer.' Two or three of these may be rarely used, but every one would be found in a dictionary of the living language.

from it by nearly two centuries more. I do not mean merely that they felt themselves more removed from its tone and spirit; their altered circumstances might explain this; but I am convinced that they found a greater difficulty and strangeness in the language of Spenser and Shakespeare than we find now; that it sounded in many ways more uncouth, more old-fashioned, more abounding in obsolete terms than it does in our ears at the present. Only in this way can I explain the tone in which they are accustomed to speak of these worthies of the near past. I must again cite Dryden, the truest representative of literary England in its good and in its evil during the last half of the seventeenth century. Of Spenser, whose death was separated from his own birth by little more than thirty years, he speaks as of one belonging to quite a different epoch, counting it much to say, "notwithstanding his obsolete language, he is still intelligible."* Nay, hear what his judgment is of Shakespeare himself, so far as language is concerned: "It must be allowed to the present age that the tongue in general is so much refined since Shakespeare's time, that many of his words and more of his phrases are scarce intelligible. And of those which we understand, some are ungrammatical, others coarse; and his whole style is so pestered with figurative expressions, that it is as affected as it is obscure."†

* *Preface to Juvenal.*

† *Preface to Troilus and Cressida.* In justice to Dryden,

Sometimes a word will emerge anew from the undercurrent of society, not indeed new, but yet to most seeming as new, its very existence having been altogether forgotten by the larger number of those speaking the language; although it must have somewhere lived on upon the lips of men. Thus, for instance, since the Californian and Australian discoveries of gold we hear often of a 'nugget' of gold; being a lump of the pure metal; and there has been some discussion whether the word has been born for the present necessity, or whether it be a recent malformation of 'ingot.' I am inclined to think that it is neither one nor the other. I would not indeed affirm that it may not be a popular recasting of 'ingot;' but only that it is not a recent one; for 'nugget' very nearly in its present form, occurs in our elder writers, being spelt 'niggot' by them.* There can be little doubt of the identity of 'niggot' and 'nugget;' all the consonants, the *stamina* of a word, being the same; while this early form 'niggot' makes more plausible their suggestion

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and lest it should be said that he had spoken poetic blasphemy, it ought not to be forgotten that 'pestered' had not in his time at all so offensive a sense as it would have now. It meant no more than inconveniently crowded; thus Milton: "Confined and *pestered* in this pinfold here."

* Thus in North's *Plutarch*, p. 499: "After the fire was quenched, they found in *niggots* of gold and silver mingled together, about a thousand talents;" and again, p. 323: "There was brought a marvellous great mass of treasure in *niggots* of gold." The word has not found its way into our dictionaries or glossaries.

that 'nugget' is only 'ingot' disguised, seeing that there wants nothing but the very common transposition of the first two letters to bring that out of this.

New words are often formed from the names of persons, actual or mythical. Some one has observed how interesting would be a complete collection, or a collection approaching to completeness, in any language of the names of *persons* which have afterwards become names of *things*, from 'nomina *appellativa*' have become 'nomina *realia*.' Let me without confining myself to those of more recent introduction endeavour to enumerate as many as I can remember of the words which have by this method been introduced into our language. To begin with mythical antiquity—the Chimæra has given us 'chimerical,' Hermes 'hermetic,' Tantalus 'to tantalize,' Hercules 'herculean,' Proteus 'protean,' Vulcan 'volcano' and 'volcanic,' and Dædalus 'dedal,' if this word may on Spenser's and Shelley's authority be allowed. Gordius, the Phrygian king who tied that famous 'gordian' knot which Alexander cut, will supply a natural transition from mythical to historical. Here Mausolus, a king of Caria, has left us 'mausoleum,' Academus 'academy,' Epicurus 'epicure,' Philip of Macedon a 'philippic,' being such a discourse as Demosthenes once launched against the enemy of Greece, and Cicero 'cicerone.' Mithridates, who had made himself poison-proof, gave us the now forgotten word 'mithridate,' for antidote; as from Hippocrates we derived 'hipocras,' or

'ypocras,' a word often occurring in our early poets, being a wine supposed to be mingled after his receipt. Gentius, a king of Illyria, gave his name to the plant 'gentian,' having been, it is said, the first to discover its virtues. A grammar used to be called a 'donat' or 'donet' (Chaucer), from Donatus, a famous grammarian. Lazarus, perhaps an actual person, has given us 'lazar' and 'lazaretto;' St. Veronica and the legend connected with her name, a 'vernicle;' being a napkin with the Saviour's face portrayed on it; Simon Magus 'simony;' Mahomet a 'mammet' or 'maumet,' meaning an idol; and 'mammetry' or idolatry; 'dunce' is from Duns Scotus; while there is a legend that the 'knot' or sandpiper is named from Canute or Knute, with whom this bird was a special favourite. To come to more modern times, and not pausing at Ben Jonson's 'chaucerisms,' Bishop Hall's 'scoganisms,' from Scogan, Edward the Fourth's jester, or his 'aretinisms,' from an infamous writer, 'a poisonous Italian ribald,' as Gabriel Harvey calls him, named Aretine; these being probably not intended even by their authors to endure; a Roman cobbler named Pasquin has given us the 'pasquil' or 'pasquinade;' 'patch' in the sense of fool, and often so used by Shakespeare, was originally the proper name of a favourite fool of Cardinal Wolsey's; Colonel Negus in Queen Anne's time first mixed the beverage which goes by his name; Lord Orrery was the first for whom an 'orrery' was constructed; and Lord Spencer first wore, or

at least first brought into fashion, a 'spencer.' Dahl, a Swede, introduced the cultivation of the 'dahlia,' and M. Tabinet, a French Protestant refugee, the making of the stuff called 'tabinet' in Dublin; in '*tram*-road,' the second syllable of the name of O*utram*, the inventor, survives. The 'tontine' was conceived by an Italian named Tonti; and another Italian, Galvani, first noted the phenomena of animal electricity or 'galvanism;' while a third Italian, 'Volta,' gave a name to the 'voltaic' battery. 'Martinet,' 'mackintosh,' 'doyly,' 'brougham,' 'to macadamize,' 'to burke,' are all names of persons or formed from persons, and then transferred to things, on the score of some connexion existing between the one and other.*

* Several of these we have in common with the French. Of their own they have 'sardanapalisme,' any piece of profuse luxury, from Sardanapalus; while for 'lambiner,' to dally or loiter over a task, they are indebted to Denis Lambin, a worthy Greek scholar of the sixteenth century, whom his adversaries accused of sluggish movement and wearisome diffuseness in style. Every reader of Pascal's *Provincial Letters* will remember Escobar, the great casuist among the Jesuits, whose convenient subterfuges for the relaxation of the moral law have there been made famous. To the notoriety which he thus acquired, he owes his introduction into the French language; where 'escobarder' is used in the sense of to equivocate, and 'escobarderie' of subterfuge or equivocation. The name of an unpopular minister of finance, M de Silhouette, unpopular because he sought to cut down unnecessary expenses in the state, was applied to whatever was cheap, and, as was implied, unduly economical; it has survived in the black outline portrait which is now called a

Again the names of popular characters in literature, such as have taken strong hold on the national mind, give birth to a number of new words. Thus from Homer we have 'mentor' for a monitor; 'stentorian' for loud-voiced; and inasmuch as with all of Hector's nobleness there is a certain amount of big talking about him, he has given us 'to hector;'* while the medieval romances about the siege of Troy ascribe to Pandarus that shameful ministry out of which his name has past into the words 'to pandar' and 'pandarism.' 'Rodomontade' is from Rodomont, a blustering and boasting hero of Boiardo, adopted by Ariosto; 'thrasonical,' from Thraso, the braggart of the Roman comedy. Cervantes has given us 'quixotic;' Swift 'lilliputian;' to Molière the French language owes 'tartuffe' and 'tartufferie.' 'Reynard' too, which with us is a duplicate for fox, while in the French 'renard' has quite excluded the older 'volpils,' was originally not the name of a kind, but the proper name of the fox-hero, the vulpine Ulysses, in that famous beast-epic of the middle ages, *Reineke Fuchs;* the immense popularity of which we gather from many evidences, from none more clearly than from this. 'Chanticleer' is in like manner the proper name of the cock, and 'Bruin'

'silhouette.' (Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, tom. xix. pp. 94, 95.) In the 'mansarde' roof we have the name of Mansart, the architect who introduced it. I need hardly add 'guillotine.'

* See Col. Mure, *Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*, vol. i. p. 350.

of the bear in the same poem.* These have not made fortune to the same extent of actually putting out in any language the names which before existed, but still have become quite familiar to us all.

We must not count as new words properly so called, although they may delay us for a minute, those comic words, most often comic combinations formed at will, and sometimes of enormous length, in which, as plays and displays of power, great writers ancient and modern have delighted. These for the most part are meant to do service for the moment, and then to pass away. The inventors of them had themselves no intention of fastening them permanently on the language. Thus among the Greeks Aristophanes coined μελλονικιάω, to loiter like Nicias, with allusion to the delays with which this prudent commander sought to put off the disastrous Sicilian expedition, with not a few other familiar to every scholar. The humour of them sometimes consists in their enormous length, as in the ἀμφιπτολεμοπηδησίστρατος of Eupolis; the σπερμαγοραιολεκιθολαχανόπωλις of Aristophanes; sometimes in their mingled observance and transgression of the laws of the language, as in the 'oculissimus' of Plautus, a comic superlative of 'oculus;' 'occisissimus' of 'occisus;' as in the 'dosones,' 'dabones,' which in Greek and in medieval Latin were names given to those who were ever promising, ever saying "I will give," but never per-

* See Génin, *Des Variations du Langage Français*, p. 12.

forming their promise. Plautus with his exuberant wit, and exulting in his mastery and command of the Latin language, will compose four or five lines consisting entirely of comic combinations thrown off for the occasion.* Of the same character is Butler's 'cynarctomachy,' or battle of a dog and bear. Nor do I suppose that Fuller, when he used 'to avunculize,' to imitate or follow in the steps of one's uncle, or Cowper, when he suggested 'extraforaneous' for out of doors, in the least intended them as lasting additions to the language.

Sometimes a word springs up in a very curious way; here is one, not having, I suppose, any great currency except among schoolboys; yet being no invention of theirs, but a genuine English word, though of somewhat late birth in the language, I mean 'to chouse.' It has a singular origin. The word is, as I have mentioned already, a Turkish one, and signifies 'interpreter.' Such an interpreter or 'chiaous' (written 'chaus' in Hackluyt, 'chiaus' in Massinger), being attached to the Turkish embassy in England, committed in the year 1609 an enormous fraud on the Turkish and Persian merchants resident in London. He succeeded in cheating them of a sum amounting to

* *Persa*, iv. 6, 20—23. At the same time these words may be earnest enough; such was the ἐλαχιστότερος of St. Paul (Ephes. iii. 8); just as in the Middle Ages some did not account it sufficient to call themselves "fratres minores, minimi, postremi," but coined 'postremissimi,' to express the depth of their "voluntary humility."

£4000—a sum very much greater at that day than at the present. From the vast dimensions of the fraud, and the notoriety which attended it, any one who cheated or defrauded was said 'to chiaous,' 'chause,' or 'chouse;' to do, that is, as this 'chiaous' had done.*

There is another very fruitful source of new words in a language, or perhaps rather another way in which it increases its vocabulary, for a question might arise whether the words thus produced ought to be called new. I mean through the splitting of single words into two or even more. The impulse and suggestion to this is in general first given by varieties in pronunciation, which are presently represented by varieties in spelling; but the result very often is that what at first were only precarious and arbitrary differences in this, come in the end to be regarded as entirely different words; they detach themselves from one another, not again to reunite; just as accidental varieties in fruits or flowers, produced at hazard, have yet permanently separated off, and settled into different kinds. They have each its own distinct domain of meaning, as by general agreement assigned to it; dividing the inheritance between

* It is curious that a correspondent of Skinner (*Etymologicon*, 1671), although quite ignorant of this story, and indeed wholly astray in his application, had suggested that 'chouse' might be thus connected with the Turkish 'chiaus.' I believe Gifford, in his edition of Ben Jonson, was the first to clear up the matter. A passage in *The Alchemist* (Act i. Sc. 1) will have put him on the right track.

them, which hitherto they held in common. No one who has not had his attention called to this matter, who has not watched and catalogued these words as they have come under his notice, would at all believe how numerous they are.

Sometimes as the accent is placed on one syllable of a word or another, it comes to have different significations, and those so distinctly marked, that the separation may be regarded as complete. Examples of this are the following: 'dívers,' and 'divérse;' 'cónjure' and 'conjúre;' 'ántic' and 'antíque;' 'húman' and 'humáne;' 'úrban' and 'urbáne;' 'géntle' and 'gentéel;' 'cústom' and 'costúme;' 'éssay' and 'assáy;' 'próperty' and 'propríety.' Or again, a word is pronounced with a full sound of its syllables, or somewhat more shortly: thus 'spirit' and 'sprite;' 'blossom' and 'bloom;' 'courtesy' and 'curtsey;' 'nourish' and 'nurse;' 'personality' and 'personalty;' 'fantasy' and 'fancy;' 'triumph' and 'trump' (the *winning* card*); 'happily' and 'haply;' 'waggon' and 'wain;' 'ordinance' and 'ordnance;' 'shallop' and 'sloop;' 'brabble' and 'brawl;' 'syrup' and 'shrub;' 'balsam' and 'balm;' 'eremite' and 'hermit;' 'nighest' and 'next;' 'posey' and 'posy;' 'fragile' and 'frail;' 'achievement' and 'hatchment;' 'manœuvre' and 'manure;'—or with the dropping of the first syllable: 'history' and 'story;'

* If there were any doubt about this matter, which indeed there is not, a reference to Latimer's famous *Sermon on Cards* would abundantly remove it, where 'triumph' and 'trump' are interchangeably used.

'etiquette' and 'ticket;' 'escheat' and 'cheat;' 'estate' and 'state;' and, older probably than any of these, 'other' and 'or;'—or with a dropping of the last syllable, as 'Britany' and Britain;' 'crony' and 'crone;'—or without losing a syllable, with more or less stress laid on the close: 'regiment' and 'regimen;' 'corpse' and 'corps;' 'bite' and 'bit;' 'sire' and 'sir;' 'land' or 'laund' and 'lawn;' 'suite' and 'suit;' 'swinge' and 'swing;' 'gulph' and 'gulp;' 'launch' and 'lance;' 'wealth' and 'weal;' 'stripe' and 'strip;' 'borne' and 'born;' 'clothes' and 'cloths;'—or a slight internal vowel change finds place, as between 'dent' and 'dint;' 'rant' and 'rent' (a ranting actor tears or *rends* a passion to tatters); 'creak' and 'croak;' 'float' and 'fleet;' 'sleek' and 'slick;' 'sheen' and 'shine;' 'shriek' and 'shrike;' 'pick' and 'peck;' 'peak,' 'pique,' and 'pike;' 'weald' and 'wold;' 'drip' and 'drop;' 'wreathe' and 'writhe;' 'spear' and 'spire' ("the least *spire* of grass," South); 'trist' and 'trust;' 'band,' 'bend' and 'bond;' 'cope,' 'cape' and 'cap;' 'tip' and 'top;' 'slent' (now obsolete) and 'slant;' 'sweep' and 'swoop;' 'wrest' and 'wrist;' 'gad' (now surviving only in gadfly) and 'goad;' 'complement' and 'compliment;' 'fitch' and 'vetch;' 'spike' and 'spoke;' 'tamper' and 'temper;' 'ragged' and 'rugged;' 'gargle' and 'gurgle;' 'snake' and 'sneak' (both crawl); 'deal' and 'dole;' 'giggle' and 'gaggle' (this last is now commonly spelt 'cackle'); 'sip,' 'sop,' 'soup' and 'sup;' 'clack,' 'click' and 'clock;' 'tetchy'

and 'touchy;' 'neat' and 'nett;' 'stud' and 'steed;' 'then' and 'than;'* 'grits' and 'grouts;' 'spirt' and 'sprout;' 'cure' and 'care;' 'prune' and 'preen;' 'mister' and 'master;' 'allay' and 'alloy;' 'ghostly' and 'ghastly;' 'person' and 'parson;' 'cleft' and 'clift,' now written 'cliff;' 'travel' and 'travail;' 'truth' and 'troth;' 'pennon' and 'pinion;' 'quail' and 'quell;' 'quell' and 'kill;' 'metal' and 'mettle;' 'chagrin' and 'shagreen;' 'can' and 'ken;' 'Francis' and 'Frances;'† 'chivalry' and 'cavalry;' 'oaf' and 'elf;' 'lose' and 'loose;' 'taint' and 'tint.' Sometimes the difference is mainly or entirely in the initial consonants, as between 'phial' and 'vial;' 'pother' and 'bother;' 'bursar' and 'purser;' 'thrice' and 'trice;' 'shatter' and 'scatter;' 'chattel' and 'cattle;' 'chant' and 'cant;' 'zealous' and 'jealous;' 'channel' and 'kennel;' 'wise' and 'guise;' 'quay' and 'key;' 'thrill,' 'trill' and 'drill;'—or in the consonants in the middle of the word, as between 'cancer' and 'canker;' 'nipple' and 'nibble;' 'tittle' and 'title;' 'price' and 'prize;' 'consort' and 'concert;'—or there is a change in both, as between 'pipe' and 'fife.'

* On these words see a learned discussion in *English Retraced*, Cambridge, 1862.

† The appropriating of 'Frances' to women and 'Francis' to men is quite of modern introduction; it was formerly nearly as often Sir Frances Drake as Sir Francis, while Fuller (*Holy State*, b. iv. c. 14) speaks of Francis Brandon, eldest *daughter* of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk; and see Ben Jonson's *New Inn*, Act. ii. Sc. i.

Or a word is spelt now with a final *k* and now with a final *ch*; out of this variation two different words have been formed; with, it may be, other slight differences superadded; thus is it with 'poke' and 'poach;' 'dyke' and 'ditch;' 'stink' and 'stench;' 'prick' and 'pritch' (now obsolete); 'break' and 'breach;' to which may be added 'broach;' 'lace' and 'latch;' 'stick' and 'stitch;' 'lurk' and 'lurch;' 'bank' and 'bench;' 'stark' and 'starch;' 'wake' and 'watch.' So too *t* and *d* are easily exchanged; as in 'clod' and 'clot;' 'vend' and 'vent;' 'brood' and 'brat;' 'halt' and 'hold;' 'sad' and 'set;' 'card' and 'chart;' 'medley' and 'motley.' Or there has grown up, besides the rigorous and accurate pronunciation of a word, a popular as well; and this in the end has formed itself into another word; thus is it with 'housewife' and 'hussey;' 'hanaper' and 'hamper;' 'puisne' and 'puny;' 'patron' and 'pattern;' 'spital' (hospital) and 'spittle' (house of correction); 'accompt' and 'account;' 'donjon' and 'dungeon;' 'nestle' and 'nuzzle' (now obsolete); 'Egyptian' and 'gypsy;' 'Bethlehem' and 'Bedlam;' 'exemplar' and 'sampler;' 'dolphin' and 'dauphin;' 'iota' and 'jot.'

Other changes cannot perhaps be reduced exactly under any of these heads; as between 'ounce' and 'inch;' 'errant' and 'arrant;' 'slack' and 'slake;' 'slow' and 'slough;' 'bow' and 'bough;' 'hew' and 'hough;' 'dies' and 'dice' (both plurals of 'die'); 'plunge' and 'flounce;' 'staff' and 'stave;' 'scull' and 'shoal;' 'benefit' and 'bene-

fice.'* Or, it may be, the difference which constitutes the two forms of the word into two words is in the spelling only, and of a character to be appreciable only by the eye, escaping altogether the ear: thus is it with 'draft' and 'draught;' 'plain' and 'plane;' 'coign' and 'coin;' 'flower' and 'flour;' 'check' and 'cheque;' 'straight' and 'strait;' 'ton' and 'tun;' 'road' and 'rode;' 'throw' and 'throe;' 'wrack' and 'rack;' 'gait' and 'gate;' 'hoard' and 'horde;' 'knoll' and 'noll;' 'chord' and 'cord;' 'drachm' and 'dram;' 'sergeant' and 'serjeant;' 'mask' and 'masque;' 'villain' and 'villein.'

* Were there need of proving that these both lie in 'beneficium,' which there is not, for in Wiclif's translation of the Bible the distinction is still latent, (1 Tim. vi. 2,) one might adduce a singularly characteristic little trait of Papal policy, which once turned upon the double use of this word. Pope Adrian the Fourth writing to the Emperor Frederic the First to complain of certain conduct of his, reminded the Emperor that he had placed the imperial crown upon his head, and would willingly have conferred even greater 'beneficia' upon him than this. Had the word been allowed to pass, it would no doubt have been afterwards appealed to as an admission on the Emperor's part, that he held the Empire as a feud or fief (for 'beneficium' was then the technical word for this, though the meaning has much narrowed since) from the Pope—the very point in dispute between them. The word was indignantly repelled by the Emperor and the whole German nation, whereupon the Pope appealed to the etymology, that 'beneficium' was but 'bonum factum,' and protested that he meant no more than to remind the Emperor of the 'benefits' which he had done him, and which he would have willingly multiplied still more.

Now, if you will put the matter to proof, you will find, I believe, in every case that there has attached itself to the different forms of a word a modification of meaning more or less sensible, that each has won for itself an independent sphere of meaning, in which it, and it only, moves. For example, 'divers' implies difference only, but 'diverse' difference with opposition; thus the several Evangelists narrate the same event in 'divers' manner, but not in 'diverse.' 'Antique' is ancient, but 'antic' is now the ancient regarded as overlived, out of date, and so in our days grotesque, ridiculous; and then, with a dropping of the reference to age, the grotesque, the ridiculous alone. 'Human' is what every man is, 'humane' is what every man ought to be; for Johnson's suggestion that 'humane' is from the French feminine, 'humaine,' and 'human' from the masculine, cannot for an instant be admitted. 'Ingenious' expresses a mental, 'ingenuous' a moral, excellence. A gardener 'prunes,' or trims his trees, properly indeed his *vines* alone (*provigner*), birds 'preen' or trim their feathers. We 'allay' wine with water; we 'alloy' gold with platina. 'Bloom' is a finer and more delicate efflorescence even than 'blossom;' thus the 'bloom,' but not the 'blossom,' of the cheek. It is now always 'clots' of blood and 'clods' of earth; a 'float' of timber, and a 'fleet' of ships; men 'vend' wares, and 'vent' complaints. A 'curtsey' is one, and that merely an external, manifestation of 'courtesy.' 'Gambling' may be, as with a fearful irony

it is called, *play*, but it is nearly as distant from 'gambolling' as hell is from heaven. Nor would it be hard, in almost every pair or larger group of words which I have adduced, as in others which no doubt might be added to complete the list, to trace a difference of meaning which has obtained a more or less distinct recognition.*

But my subject is inexhaustible; it has no limits except those, which indeed may be often narrow enough, imposed by my own ignorance on the one side; and on the other, by the necessity of consult-

* The same happens in other languages. Thus in Greek 'ἀνάθεμα' and 'ἀνάθημα' both signify that which is devoted, though in very different senses, to the gods; 'θάρσος,' boldness, and 'θράσος,' temerity, were no more at first than different spellings of the same word; not otherwise is it with γρῖπος and γρῖφος, ἔθος and ἦθος, βρύκω and βρύχω: while ὀβελὸς and ὀβολὸς, σορὸς and σωρὸς, are probably the same words. So too in Latin 'penna' and 'pinna' differ only in form, and signify alike a 'wing;' while yet 'penna' has come to be used for the wing of a bird, 'pinna' (its diminutive 'pinnaculum,' has given us 'pinnacle') for that of a building. So is it with 'Thrax' a 'Thracian, and 'Threx' a gladiator; with 'codex' and 'caudex;' 'forfex' and 'forceps;' 'anticus' and 'antiquus;' 'celeber' and 'creber; 'infacetus' and 'inficetus;' 'providentia,' 'prudentia,' and 'provincia;' 'columen' and 'culmen;' 'coïtus' and 'cœtus;' 'ægrimonia' and 'ærumna;' 'Lucina' and 'luna;' 'navita' and 'nauta:' in German with 'rechtlich' and 'redlich;' 'schlecht' and 'schlicht;' 'ahnden' and 'ahnen;' 'biegsam' and 'beugsam;' 'fursehung' and 'vorsehung;' 'deich' and 'teich;' 'trotz' and 'trutz;' 'born' and 'brunn;' 'athem' and 'odem:' in French with 'harnois' the armour, or 'harness,' of a soldier, 'harnais' of a horse; with 'Zéphire' and 'zéphir,' and with many more.

ing your patience, and of only choosing such matter as will admit a popular setting forth. These necessities, however, bid me to pause, and suggest that I should not look round for other quarters from whence accessions of new words are derived. Doubtless I should not be long without finding many such. I must satisfy myself for the rest with a very brief consideration of the *motives* which, as they have been, are still at work among us, inducing us to seek for these augmentations of our vocabulary.

And first, the desire of greater clearness is a frequent motive and inducement to this. It has been well and truly said: "Every new term, expressing a fact or a difference not precisely or adequately expressed by any other word in the same language, is a new organ of thought for the mind that has learned it."* The limits of their vocabulary are in fact for most men the limits of their knowledge; and in a great degree for us all. Of course I do not affirm that it is absolutely impossible to have our mental conceptions clearer and more distinct than our words; but it is very hard to have, and still harder to keep, them so. And therefore it is that men, conscious of this, so soon as ever they have learned to distinguish in their minds, are urged by an almost irresistible impulse to distinguish also in their words. They feel that nothing is made sure till this is done.

The sense that a word covers too large a space

* Coleridge, *Church and State*, p. 200.

of meaning, is the frequent occasion of the introduction of another, which shall relieve it of a portion of this. Thus, there was a time when 'witch' was applied equally to male and female dealers in unlawful magical arts. Simon Magus, for example, and Elymas are both 'witches,' in Wiclif's *New Testament* (Acts viii. 9; xiii. 8), and Posthumus in *Cymbeline:* but when the medieval Latin 'sortiarius' (not 'sortitor' as in Richardson), supplied another word, the French 'sorcier,' and thus our English 'sorcerer' (originally the "caster of lots"), then 'witch' gradually was confined to the hag, or female practiser of these arts, while 'sorcerer' was applied to the male.

New necessities, new evolutions of society into more complex conditions, evoke new words; which come forth, because they are required now; but did not formerly exist, because they were not required in the period preceding. For example, in Greece so long as the poet sang his own verses, 'singer' (ἀοιδὸς) sufficiently expressed the double function; such a 'singer' was Homer, and such Homer describes Demodocus, the bard of the Phæacians; that double function, in fact, not being in his time contemplated as double, but each part of it so naturally completing the other, that no second word was required. When, however, in the division of labour one made the verses which another chaunted, then 'poet' or 'maker,' a word unknown in the Homeric age, arose. In like manner, when 'physicians' were the only natural philosophers, the word covered this meaning as well as that other which it still retains;

but when the investigation of nature and natural causes detached itself from the art of healing, became an independent study of itself, the name 'physician' remained to that which was as the stock and stem of the art, while the new offshoot sought out a new name for itself.

Another motive to the invention of new words, is the desire thereby to cut short lengthy explanations, tedious circuits of language. Science is often an immense gainer by words, which say singly what it would have taken whole sentences otherwise to have said. Thus 'isothermal' is quite of modern invention; but what a long story it would be to tell the meaning of '*isothermal* lines,' all which is summed up in and saved by the word. We have long had the word 'assimilation' in our dictionaries; 'dissimilation' has not yet found its way into them, but it speedily will. It will appear first, if it has not already appeared, in our books on language. I express myself with this confidence, because the advance of philological enquiry has rendered it almost a matter of necessity that we should possess a word to designate a certain process, and no other word would designate it at all so well. There is a process of 'assimilation' going on very extensively in language; it occurs where the organs of speech find themselves helped by changing a letter for another which has just occurred, or will just occur in a word; thus we say not 'a*df*iance' but 'a*ff*iance,' not 're*n*ow*n*,' as our ancestors did when the word 'renommée' was first naturalized, but 're*n*own.' At the same time

there is another opposite process, where some letter would recur too often for euphony or comfort in speaking, if the strict form of the word were too closely held fast, and where consequently this letter is exchanged for some other, generally for some nearly allied; thus it is at least a reasonable suggestion, that 'cœruleum' was once 'cœluleum,' from cœlum: so too the Italians prefer 'veleno' to 'veneno;' and we 'cinnamon' to 'cinnamom' (the earlier form); in 'turtle' and 'purple' we have shrunk from the double 'r' of 'turtur' and 'purpura;' and this process of *making unlike*, requiring a term to express it, will create, or indeed has created, the word 'dissimilation,' which probably will in due time establish itself among us in far wider than its primary use.

'Watershed' has only recently begun to appear in books of geography; and yet how convenient it must be admitted to be; how much more so than "line of water parting," which it has succeeded; meaning, as I need hardly tell you it does, not merely that which *sheds* the waters, but that which *divides* them ('wasserscheide'); and being applied to that exact ridge and highest line in a mountain region, where the waters of that region separate off and divide, some to one side, and some to the other; as in the Rocky Mountains of North America there are streams rising within very few miles of one another, which flow severally east and west, and, if not in unbroken course, yet as affluents to larger rivers, fall at last severally into the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. It must be allowed, I think,

that not merely geographical terminology, but geography itself, had a benefactor in him who first endowed it with so expressive and comprehensive a word, bringing before us a fact which we should scarcely have been aware of without it.

There is another word which I have just employed, 'affluent,' in the sense of a stream which does not flow into the sea, but joins a larger stream, as for instance, the Isis is an 'affluent' of the Thames, the Moselle of the Rhine. It is itself an example in the same kind of that whereof I have been speaking, having been only recently constituted a substantive, and employed in this sense, while yet its utility is obvious. 'Confluents' would perhaps be a fitter name, where the rivers, like the Missouri and the Missisippi, were of equal or nearly equal importance up to the time of their meeting.

Again, new words are coined out of the necessity which men feel of filling up gaps in the language. Thoughtful men, comparing their own language with that of other nations, become conscious of deficiencies, of important matters unexpressed in their own, and with more or less success proceed to supply the deficiency. For example, that sin of sins, the undue love of self, with the postponing of the interests of all others to our own, had for a long time no word to express it in English. Help was sought from the Greek, and from the Latin. 'Philauty' (*φιλαυτία*) had been more than once attempted by our scholars; but found no popular acceptance. This failing, men turned to the Latin;

one writer trying to supply the want by calling the man a 'suist,' as one seeking *his own* things ('sua'), and the sin itself, 'suicism.' The gap, however, was not really filled up, till some of the Puritan writers, drawing on our Saxon, devised 'selfish' and 'selfishness,' words which to us seem obvious enough, but which yet are little more than two hundred years old.*

* A passage from Hacket's *Life of Archbishop Williams*, part 2, p. 144, marks the first rise of this word, and the quarter from whence it arose: "When they [the Presbyterians] saw that he was not *selfish* (it is a word of their own new mint), &c." In Whitlock's *Zootomia* (1654) there is another indication of it as a novelty, p. 364: "If constancy may be tainted with this *selfishness* (to use our *new wordings* of old and general actings)"—It is he who in his striking essay, *The Grand Schismatic, or Suist Anatomized*, puts forward his own words, 'suist,' and 'suicism,' in lieu of those which have ultimately been adopted. 'Suicism,' let me observe, had not in his time the obvious objection of resembling another word too nearly, and being liable to be confused with it; for 'suicide' did not then exist in the language, nor indeed till some twenty years later. The coming up of 'suicide' is marked by this passage in Phillips' *New World of Words*, 1671, 3rd edit.: "Nor less to be exploded is the word '*suicide*,' which may as well seem to participate of *sus* a sow, as of the pronoun *sui*." In the *Index* to Jackson's Works, published two years later, it is still '*suicidium*'—"the horrid *suicidium* of the Jews at York." 'Suicide' is apparently of much later introduction into French. Génin (*Récréations Philol.* vol. i. p. 194) places it about the year 1738, and makes the Abbé Desfontaines its first sponsor. He is wrong, as the words just quoted show, in supposing that we borrowed it from the French, or that the word did not exist in English till the middle of last century. The French sometimes complain that the fashion of suicide was borrowed

Before quitting this part of the subject, let me say a few words in conclusion on this deliberate

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from England. It would seem at all events probable that the word was so borrowed.

Let me urge here the advantage of a complete collection, or one as nearly complete as the industry of the collectors would allow, of all the notices in our literature, which mark, and would serve as dates for, the first incoming of new words into the language. These notices are of the most various kinds. Sometimes they are protests and remonstrances, as that just quoted, against a new word's introduction; sometimes they are gratulations at the same; while many hold themselves neuter as to approval or disapproval, and merely state, or allow us to gather, the fact of a word's recent appearance. There are not a few of these notices in Richardson's *Dictionary:* thus one from Lord Bacon under 'essay;' from Swift under 'banter;' from Sir Thomas Elyot under 'mansuetude;' from Lord Chesterfield under 'flirtation;' from Davies and Marlowe's *Epigrams* under 'gull;' from Roger North under 'sham' (Appendix); the third quotation from Dryden under 'mob;' one from the same under 'philanthropy,' and again under 'witticism,' in which he claims the authorship of the word; that from Evelyn under 'miss;' and from Milton under 'demagogue.' There are also notices of the same kind in *Todd's Johnson.* The work, however, is one which no single scholar could hope to accomplish, which could only be accomplished by many lovers of their native tongue throwing into a common stock the results of their several studies. The sources from which these illustrative passages might be gathered cannot beforehand be enumerated, inasmuch as it is difficult to say in what unexpected quarter they would not sometimes be found, although some of these sources are obvious enough. As a very slight sample of what might be done in this way by the joint contributions of many, let me throw together references to a few passages of the kind which I do not think have found their

introduction of words to supply felt omissions in a language, and the limits within which this or any

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way into any of our dictionaries. Thus add to that which Richardson has quoted on 'banter,' another from *The Tatler*, No. 230. On 'plunder' there are two instructive passages in Fuller's *Church History*, b. xi. § 4, 33; and b. ix. § 4; and one in Heylin's *Animadversions* thereupon, p. 196. On 'admiralty' see a note in Harington's *Ariosto*, book 19; on 'maturity' Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governor*, b. i. c. 22; and on 'industry' the same, b. i. c. 23; on 'neophyte' a notice in Fulke's *Defence of the English Bible*, Parker Society's edition, p. 586; and on 'panorama,' and marking its recent introduction (it is not in Johnson), a passage in Pegge's *Anecdotes of the English Language*, first published in 1803, but my reference is to the edition of 1814, p. 306; on 'accommodate,' and supplying a date for its first coming into popular use, see Shakespeare's 2 *Henry IV.* Act 3, Sc. 2; on 'shrub,' Junius' *Etymologicon*, s. v. 'syrup;' on 'sentiment' and 'cajole' Skinner, s. vv., in his *Etymologicon* ('vox nuper civitate donata'); and on 'opera' Evelyn's *Memoirs and Diary*, 1827, vol. i. pp. 189, 190. In such a collection should be included those passages of our literature which supply implicit evidence for the non-existence of a word up to a certain moment. It may be urged that it is difficult, nay impossible, to prove a negative; and yet a passage like this from Bolingbroke makes certain that when it was written the word 'isolated' did not exist in our language: "The events we are witnesses of in the course of the longest life, appear to us very often original, unprepared, signal and *unrelative:* if I may use such a word for want of a better in English. In French I would say *isolés*" (*Notes and Queries*, No. 226). Compare Lord Chesterfield in a letter to Bishop Chenevix, of date March 12, 1767: "I have survived almost all my cotemporaries, and as I am too old to make new acquaintances, I find myself *isolé*." So, too, it is pretty certain that 'amphibious' was not yet English, when one writes (in 1618): "We are

other conscious interference with the development of a language is desirable or possible. By the time that a people begin to meditate upon their language, to be aware by a conscious reflective act either of its merits or deficiencies, by far the greater and more important part of its work is done; it is fixed in respect of its structure in immutable forms; the region in which any alteration or modification, addition to it, or subtraction from it, deliberately devised and carried out, may be possible, is very limited indeed. Its great laws are too firmly established to admit of this; so that

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like those creatures called *ἀμφίβια*, who live in water or on land." *Ζωολογία*, the title of a book published in 1649, makes it clear that 'zoology' was not yet in our vocabulary, as *ζωόφυτον* (Jackson) proves the same for 'zoophyte,' and *πολυθεισμος* (Gell) for 'polytheism.' One precaution, let me observe, would be necessary in the collecting, or rather in the adopting of any statements about the newness of a word—for the passages themselves, even when erroneous, ought not the less to be noted—namely, that, where there is the least motive for suspicion, no one's affirmation ought to be accepted simply and at once as to the novelty of a word; for all here are liable to error. Thus more than one which Sir Thomas Elyot indicates as new in his time, 'magnanimity' for example, (*The Governor*, 2, 14) are to be met in Chaucer. When Skinner affirmed of 'sentiment' that it had only recently obtained the rights of English citizenship from the translators of French books, he was altogether mistaken, this word being also one of continual recurrence in Chaucer. An intelligent correspondent gives in *Notes and Queries*, No. 225, a useful catalogue of recent neologies in our speech, which yet would require to be used with caution, for there are at least half a dozen in the list which have not the smallest right to be so considered.

almost nothing can be taken from it, which it has got; almost nothing added to it, which it has *not* got. It will travel indeed in certain courses of change; but it would be as easy almost to alter the career of a planet as for man to alter these. This is sometimes a subject of regret with those who see what they believe manifest defects or blemishes in their language, and such as appear to them capable of remedy. And yet in fact this is well; since for once that these redressers of real or fancied wrongs, these suppliers of things lacking, would have mended, we may be tolerably confident that ten times, yea, a hundred times, they would have marred; letting go that which would have been well retained; retaining that which by a necessary law the language now dismisses and lets go; and in manifold ways interfering with those processes of a natural logic, which are here evermore at work. The genius of a language, unconsciously presiding over all its transformations, and conducting them to a definite issue, will have been a far truer, far safer guide, than the artificial wit, however subtle, of any single man, or of any association of men. For the genius of a language is the sense and inner conviction of all who speak it, as to what it ought to be, and the means by which it will best attain its objects; and granting that a pair of eyes, or two or three pair of eyes may see much, yet millions of eyes will certainly see more.

It is only with the words, and not with the forms and laws of a language, that any interference

such as I have just supposed is possible. Something, indeed much, may here be done by wise masters, in the way of rejecting that which would deform, allowing and adopting that which will strengthen and enrich. Those who would purify or enrich a language, so long as they have kept within this their proper sphere, have often effected much, more than at first could have seemed possible. The history of the German language affords so much better illustration of this than our own would do, that I shall make no scruple in seeking my examples there. When the patriotic Germans began to wake up to a consciousness of the enormous encroachments which foreign languages, the Latin and French above all, had made on their native tongue, the lodgements which they had therein effected, and the danger which threatened it, namely, that it should cease to be German at all, but only a mingle-mangle, a variegated patchwork of many languages, without any unity or inner coherence at all, various societies were instituted among them, at the beginning and during the course of the seventeenth century, for the recovering of what was lost of their own, for the expelling of that which had intruded from abroad; and these with excellent effect.

But more effectual than these societies were the efforts of single men, who in this merited well of their country.* In respect of words which are now

* There is an admirable Essay by Leibnitz with this view (*Opera*, vol. vi. part 2, pp. 6—51) in French and German,

entirely received by the whole nation, it is often possible to designate the writers who first substituted them for some affected Gallicism or unnecessary Latinism. Thus to Lessing his fellow-countrymen owe the substitution of 'zartgefühl' for 'delicatesse,' of 'empfindsamkeit' for 'sentimentalität,' of 'wesenheit' for 'essence.' It was Voss (1786) who first employed 'alterthümlich' for 'antik.' Wieland too was the author or reviver of a multitude of excellent words, for which often he had to do earnest battle at the first; such were 'seligkeit,' 'anmuth,' 'entzückung,' 'festlich,' 'entwirren,' with many more. For 'maskerade,' Campe would have fain substituted 'larventanz.' It was a novelty when Büsching called his great work on geography 'erdbeschreibung' instead of 'geographie;' while 'schnellpost' instead of 'diligence,' 'zerrbild' for 'carricatur' are also of recent introduction. In regard of 'wörterbuch' itself, J. Grimm tells us he can find no example of its use dating earlier than 1719.

Yet at the same time it must be acknowledged that some of these reformers proceeded with more zeal than knowledge, while others did whatever in them lay to make the whole movement absurd—even as there ever hang on the skirts of a noble movement, be it in literature or politics or higher things yet, those who contribute their little all to bring ridicule and contempt upon it. Thus in the

with this title, *Considérations sur la Culture et la Perfection de la Langue Allemande.*

reaction against foreign interlopers which ensued, and in the zeal to purify the language from them, some went to such extravagant excesses as to desire to get rid of 'testament,' 'apostel,' which last Campe would have replaced by 'lehrbote,' with other words like these, consecrated by longest use, and to find native substitutes in their room; or they understood so little what words deserved to be called foreign, or how to draw the line between them and native, that they would fain have gotten rid of 'vater,' 'mutter,' 'wein,' 'fenster,' 'meister,' 'kelch;'* the first three of which belong to the German language by just as good a right as they do to the Latin and the Greek; while the other three have been naturalized so long that to propose to expel them now was as if, having passed an alien act for the banishment of all foreigners, we should proceed to include under that name, and as such drive forth from the kingdom, the descendants of the French Protestants who found refuge here at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, or even of the Flemings who settled among us in the time of our Edwards. One notable enthusiast in this line proposed to create an entirely new nomenclature for all the mythological personages of the Greek and the Roman pantheon, who, one would think, might have been allowed, if any, to retain their Greek and Latin names. So far however from this, they were to exchange these for equivalent

* *Zur Geschichte und Beurtheilung der Fremdwörter im Deutschen*, von Aug. Fuchs, Dessau, 1812, pp. 85-91.

German titles; Cupid was to be 'Lustkind,' Flora 'Bluminne,' Aurora 'Röthin;' instead of Apollo schoolboys were to speak of 'Singhold;' instead of Pan of 'Schaflieb;' instead of Jupiter of 'Helfevater,' with much else of the same kind. Let us beware (and the warning extends much further than to the matter in hand) of making a good cause ridiculous by our manner of supporting it, of assuming that exaggerations on one side can only be redressed by exaggerations as great upon the other.

LECTURE III.

DIMINUTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

I TOOK occasion to observe at the commencement of my last lecture that it is the essential character of a living language to be in flux and flow, to be gaining and losing; the words which constitute it as little continuing exactly the same, or in the same relations to one another, as do the atoms which at any one moment make up our bodies remain for ever without subtraction or addition. As I then undertook for my especial subject to trace some of the acquisitions which our own language had made, I shall consider in the present some of the losses, or at any rate diminutions, which during the same period it has endured. But it will be well here, by one or two remarks going before, to avert any possible misapprehensions of my meaning.

It is certain that all languages must, or at least all languages do in the end, perish. They run their course; not all at the same rate, for the tendency to change is different in different languages, both from internal causes (mechanism and the like), and also from causes external to the language, laid in the varying velocities of social progress and social decline; but so it is, that whether of shorter or longer life, they have their youth, their manhood,

their old age, their decrepitude, their final dissolution. Not indeed that, even when this last hour has arrived, they disappear, leaving no traces behind them. On the contrary, out of their death a new life comes forth; they pass into new forms, the materials of which they were composed more or less survive, but these now organized in new shapes and according to other laws of life. Thus, for example, the Latin perishes as a living language, but a chief part of the words that composed it live on in the four daughter languages, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese; or the six, if we count the Provençal and Wallachian; not a few in our own. Still in their own proper being languages perish and pass away; there are dead records of what they were in books; not living men who speak them any more. Seeing then that they thus die, they must have had the germs of a possible decay and death in them from the beginning.

Nor is this all; but in such mighty strong built fabrics as these, the causes which thus bring about their final dissolution must have been actually at work very long before the results began to be visible. Indeed, very often it is with them as with states, which, while in some respects they are knitting and strengthening, in others are already unfolding the seeds of their future and, it may be, still remote overthrow. Equally in these and those, in states and in languages, it would be a serious mistake to assume that all up to a certain point and period is growth and gain, while all after

is decay and loss. On the contrary, there are long periods during which growth in some directions is going hand in hand with decay in others; losses in one kind are being compensated, or more than compensated, by gains in another; during which a language changes, but only as the bud changes into the flower, and the flower into the fruit. A time indeed arrives when the growth and gains, becoming ever fewer, cease to constitute any longer a compensation for the losses and the decay; which are ever becoming more; when the forces of disorganization and death at work are stronger than those of life and order. It is from this moment the decline of a language may properly be dated. But until that crisis and turning point has arrived, we may be quite justified in speaking of the losses of a language, and may esteem them most real, without in the least thereby implying that the period of its commencing degeneracy has begun. This may yet be far distant: and therefore when I dwell on certain losses and diminutions which our own has undergone, or is undergoing, you will not conclude that I am seeking to present it to you as now travelling the downward course to dissolution and death. This is very far from my intention. If in some respects it is losing, in others it is gaining. Nor is everything which it lets go, a loss; for this too, the parting with a word in which there is no true help, the dropping of a cumbrous or superfluous form, may itself be sometimes a most real gain. English is undoubtedly becoming different from

what it has been; but only different in that it is passing into another stage of its development; only different, as the fruit is different from the flower, and the flower from the bud; having changed its merits, but not having renounced them; possessing, it may be, less of beauty, but more of usefulness; not, perhaps, serving the poet so well, but serving the historian and philosopher and theologian better than before.

One observation more let me make, before entering on the special details of my subject. It is this. The losses and diminutions of a language differ in one respect from its gains and acquisitions—namely, that they are of *two* kinds, while its gains are only of *one*. Its gains are only in *words;* it never puts forth in the course of its later evolution a new *power;* it never makes for itself a new case, or a new tense, or a new comparative. But its losses are both in words and in *powers*—in words of course, but in powers also: it leaves behind it, as it travels onward, cases which it once possessed; renounces the employment of tenses which it once used; forgets its dual; is content with one termination both for masculine and feminine, and so on. Nor is this a peculiar feature of one language, but the universal law of all. "In all languages," as has been well said, "there is a constant tendency to relieve themselves of that precision which chooses a fresh symbol for every shade of meaning, to lessen the amount of nice distinction, and detect as it were a royal road to the interchange of opinion." For example, a vast number

of languages had at an early period of their development, besides the singular and plural, a dual number, some even a trinal, which they have let go at a later. But what I mean by a language renouncing its powers will, I trust, be more clear to you before my lecture is concluded. This much I have here said on the matter, to explain and justify a division which I shall make, considering first the losses of the English language in *words*, and then in *powers*.

And first, there is going forward a continual extinction of the words in our language—as indeed in every other. When I speak of this the dying out of words, I do not refer to mere *tentative*, experimental words, not a few of which I adduced in my last lecture, words offered to the language, but not accepted by it; I refer rather to such as either belonged to the primitive stock of the language, or if not so, which had been domiciled in it long, that they might have been supposed to have found in it a lasting home. Thus not a few pure Anglo-Saxon words which lived on into the times of our early English, have subsequently dropped out of our vocabulary, sometimes leaving a gap which has never since been filled, but their places oftener taken by others which have come up in their room. Not to mention those of Chaucer and Wiclif, which are very numerous, many held their ground to far later periods, and yet have finally given way. That beautiful word 'wanhope' for despair, hope which has so *waned* that now there is an entire *want* of it, was in use down to

the reign of Elizabeth; it occurs so late as in the poems of Gascoigne.* 'Skinker' for cupbearer, (an ungraceful word, no doubt) is used by Shakespeare, and lasted to Dryden's times and beyond. Spenser uses often 'to welk' (welken) in the sense of to fade, 'to sty' for to mount, 'to hery' as to glorify or praise, 'to halse' as to embrace, 'teene' as vexation or grief: Shakespeare 'to tarre' as to provoke, 'to sperr' as to enclose or bar in; 'to sag' for to droop, or hang the head downward. Holland employs 'geir'† for vulture ("vultures or *geirs*"), 'specht' for woodpecker, 'reise' for journey, 'frimm' for lusty or strong. 'To schimmer' occurs in Bishop Hall; 'to tind,' that is, to kindle, and surviving in 'tinder,' is used by Bishop Sanderson; 'to nimm,' or take, as late as by Fuller. A rogue is a 'skellum' in Sir Thomas Urquhart. 'Nesh' in the sense of soft through moisture, 'leer' in that of empty, 'eame' in that of uncle, *mother's* brother (the German 'oheim'), good Saxon-English once, still live on in some of our provincial

* It is still used in prose as late as the age of Henry VIII.; see the *State Papers*, vol. viii. p. 247. It was the latest survivor of a whole group or family of words which continued much longer in Scotland than with us; of which some perhaps continue there still; these are but a few of them; 'wanthrift' for extravagance; 'wanluck,' misfortune; 'wanlust,' languor; 'wanwit,' folly; 'wangrace,' wickedness; 'wantrust' (Chaucer), distrust.

† We must not suppose that this still survives in '*gir*falcon;' which wholly belongs to the Latin element of the language; being the later Latin 'gyrofalco,' and that, "a *gyrandò*, quia diu *gyrando* acriter prædam insequitur."

dialects; so does 'flitter-mouse' or 'flutter-mouse' (mus volitans), where we should use bat. Indeed of those above named several do the same; it is so with 'frimm,' with 'to sag,' 'to nimm.' 'Heft,' employed by Shakespeare in the sense of weight, is still employed in the same sense by our peasants in Hampshire.

A number of vigorous compounds we have dropped and let go. 'Earsports' for entertainments of song or music (ἀκροάματα) is a constantly recurring word in Holland's *Plutarch*. Were it not for Shakespeare, we should have quite forgotten that young men of hasty fiery valour were called 'hotspurs;' and even now we regard the word rather as the proper name of one than that which would have been once alike the designation of all.* Fuller warns men that they should not 'witwanton' with God. Severe austere old men, such as, in Falstaff's words, would "hate us youth," were 'grimsirs' or 'grimsires' once (Massinger). 'Realmrape' (=usurpation), occurring in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, is a vigorous word. 'Rootfast' and 'rootfastness'† were ill lost, being worthy to have lived; so too was Lord Brooke's 'bookhunger;' and Baxter's 'word-warriors,' with which term he noted those whose strife was only about words. 'Malingerer' is familiar enough to military men, but I do not find

* "Some *hot-spurs* there were that gave counsel to go against them with all their forces, and to fright and terrify them, if they made slow haste." (Holland's *Livy*, p. 922.)

† *State Papers*, vol. vi. p. 534.

it in our dictionaries; being the soldier who, out of *evil will* (malin gré) to his work, shams and shirks, and is not found in the ranks.

Those who would gladly have seen the Anglo-Saxon to have predominated over the Latin element in our language, even more than it actually has done, must note with regret that in many instances a word of the former stock has been dropped, and a Latin coined to supply its place; or where the two once existed side by side, the Saxon has died, and the Latin lived on. Thus Wiclif employed 'soothsaw,' where we now use proverb; 'sourdough,' where we employ leaven; 'wellwillingness' for benevolence; 'againbuying' for redemption; 'againrising' for resurrection; 'undeadliness' for immortality; 'uncunningness' for ignorance; 'aftercomer' for descendant; 'greatdoingly' for magnificently; 'to afterthink' (still in use in Lancashire) for to repent; 'medeful,' which has given way to meritorious; 'untellable' for ineffable; 'dearworth' for precious; Chaucer has 'foreword' for promise; Sir John Cheke 'freshman' for proselyte; 'mooned' for lunatic; 'foreshewer' for prophet; 'hundreder' for centurion; Jewel 'foretalk,' where we now employ preface; Holland 'sunstead' where we use solstice; 'leechcraft' instead of medicine; and another, 'wordcraft' for logic; 'starconner' (Gascoigne) did service once, if not instead of astrologer, yet side by side with it; 'halfgod' (Golding) had the advantage over 'demigod,' that it was all of one piece; 'to eyebite' (Holland) told its story at least as well as to

fascinate; 'shriftfather' as confessor; 'earshrift' (Cartwright) is only two syllables, while auricular confession is eight; 'waterfright' is a better word than our awkward Greek hydrophobia. The lamprey (lambens petram) was called once the 'suckstone' or the 'lickstone;' and the anemone the 'windflower.' 'Umstroke,' if it had lived on (it appears as late as Fuller, though our Dictionaries know nothing of it), migh thave made 'circumference' and 'periphery' unnecessary. 'Wanhope,' as we saw just now, has given place to despair, 'middler' to mediator; and it would be easy to increase this list.

I had occasion just now to notice the fact that many words survive in our provincial dialects, long after they have died out from the main body of the speech. The fact is one connected with so much of deep interest in the history of language that I cannot pass it thus slightly over. It is one which, rightly regarded, may assist to put us in a just point of view for estimating the character of the local and provincial in speech, and rescuing it from that unmerited contempt and neglect with which it is often regarded. I must here go somewhat further back than I could wish; but only so, only by looking at the matter in connexion with other phenomena of speech, can I hope to explain to you the worth and significance which local and provincial words and usages must oftentimes possess.

Let us then first suppose a portion of those speaking a language to have been separated off from the main body of its speakers, either through

their forsaking for one cause or other of their native seats, or by the intrusion of a hostile people, like a wedge, between them and the others, forcibly keeping them asunder, and cutting off their communications one with the other, as the Saxons intruded between the Britons of Cornwall and of Wales. In such a case it will inevitably happen that before very long differences of speech will begin to reveal themselves between those to whom even dialectic distinctions may have been once unknown. The divergences will be of various kinds. Idioms will come up in the separated body, which, not being recognized and allowed by those who remain the arbiters of the language, will be esteemed by them, should they come under their notice, violations of its law, or at any rate departures from its purity. Again, where a colony has gone forth into new seats, and exists under new conditions, it is probable that the necessities, physical and moral, rising out of these new conditions, will give birth to words, which there will be nothing to call out among those who continue in the old haunts of the nation. Intercourse with new tribes and people will bring in new words, as, for instance, contact with the Indian tribes of North America has given to American English a certain number of words hardly or not at all allowed or known by us; or as the presence of a large Dutch population at the Cape has given to the English spoken there many words, as 'inspan,' 'outspan,' 'spoor,' of which our home English knows nothing.

There is another cause, however, which will pro-

bably be more effectual than all these, namely, that words will in process of time be dropped by those who constitute the original stock of the nation, which will not be dropped by the offshoot; idioms which those have overlived, and have stored up in the unhonoured lumber-room of the past, will still be in use and currency among the smaller and separated section which has gone forth; and thus it will come to pass that what seems and in fact is the newer swarm, will have many older words, and very often an archaic air and old-world fashion both about the words they use, their way of pronouncing, their order and manner of combining them. Thus after the Conquest we know that our insular French gradually diverged from the French of the Continent. The Prioress in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* could speak her French "full faire and fetishly," but it was French, as the poet slyly adds,

> "After the scole of Stratford atte bow,
> For French of Paris was to hire unknowe."

One of our old chroniclers, writing in the reign of Elizabeth, informs us that by the English colonists within the Pale in Ireland numerous words were preserved in common use, "the dregs of the old ancient Chaucer English" as he contemptuously calls it, which had become quite obsolete and forgotten in England itself. For example they still called a spider an 'attercop'—a word, by the way, still in popular use in the North;—a physician a 'leech,' as in poetry he still is called; a dunghill

was still for them a 'mixen;' (the word is still common all over England in this sense;) a quadrangle or base court was a 'bawn;'* they employed 'uncouth' in the earlier sense of unknown. Nay more, their general manner of speech was so different, though continuing English still, that Englishmen at their first coming over often found it hard or impossible to comprehend. We have another example of the same in what took place after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the consequent formation of colonies of Protestant French emigrants in various places, especially in Amsterdam and other chief cities of Holland. There gradually grew up among these what came to be called "refugee French," which within a generation or two diverged in several particulars from the classical language of France; its divergence being mainly occasioned by this, that it remained stationary, while the classical language was in motion; it retained usages and words, which the latter had dismissed.†

Nor is it otherwise in respect of our English provincialisms. It is true that our country people who in the main employ them, have not been separated by distance of space, nor yet by insurmountable obstacles intervening, from the main

* The only two writers of whom I am aware as subsequently using this word are, both writing in Ireland and of Irish matters, Spenser and Swift. The passages are both quoted in Richardson's *Dictionary*.

† There is an excellent account of this "refugee French" in Weiss' *History of the Protestant Refugees of France*.

body of their fellow-countrymen; but they have been quite as effectually divided by deficient education. They have been, if not locally, yet intellectually, kept at a distance from the onward march of the nation's mind; and of them also it is true that many of their words, idioms, turns of speech, which we are ready to set down as vulgarisms, solecisms of speech, violations of the primary rules of grammar, do merely attest that those who employ them have not kept abreast with the advance of the language and nation, but have been left behind by it. The usages are only local in the fact that, having once been employed by the whole body of the English people, they have now receded from the lips of all except those in some certain country districts, who have been more faithful than others to the traditions of the past.

It is thus in respect of a multitude of isolated words, which were excellent Anglo-Saxon, which were excellent early English, and which only are not excellent present English, because use, which is the supreme arbiter in these matters, has decided against their further employment. Several of these I enumerated just now. It is thus also with several grammatical forms and flexions. For instance, where we decline the plural of 'I sing,' 'we sing,' 'ye sing,' 'they sing,' there are parts of England in which they would decline, 'we sing*en*,' 'ye sing*en*,' 'they sing*en*.' This is not indeed the original form of the plural, but it is that form of it which, coming

up about Chaucer's time, was just going out in Spenser's; he, though we must ever keep in mind that he does not fairly represent the language of his time, or indeed of any time, affecting a certain artificial archaism both in words and forms, continually uses it.* After him it becomes ever rarer, the last of whom I am aware as occasionally using it being Fuller, until it quite disappears.

Of such as may now employ forms like these we must say, not that they violate the laws of the language, but only that they have taken their *permanent* stand at a point which was only a point of transition, and which it has now left behind, and overlived. Thus, to take examples which you may hear at the present day in almost any part of England—a countryman will say, "He made me *afeard*;" or "The price of corn *ris* last

* With all its severity, there is some truth in Ben Jonson's observation: "Spenser, in affecting the ancients, writ no language." In this matter, however, Ben Jonson was at one with him; for he does not hesitate to express his strong regret that this form has not been retained. "The *persons* plural," he says (*English Grammar*, c. 17), "keep the termination of the first *person* singular. In former times, till about the reign of King Henry VIII., they were wont to be formed by adding *en*; thus, *loven, sayen, complainen*. But now (whatsoever is the cause) it hath quite grown out of use, and that other so generally prevailed, that I dare not presume to set this afoot again; albeit (to tell you my opinion) I am persuaded that the lack hereof, well considered, will be found a great blemish to our tongue. For seeing *time* and *person* be as it were the right and left hand of a verb, what can the maiming bring else, but a lameness to the whole body?"

market day;" or "I will *axe* him his name;" or "I tell *ye*." You would probably set these phrases down for barbarous English. They are not so at all; in one sense they are quite as good English as "He made me *afraid*;" or "The price of corn *rose* last market day;" or "I will *ask* him his name." 'Afeard,' used by Spenser, is the regular participle of the old verb 'to affear,' still existing as a law term, as 'afraid' is of to 'affray,' and just as good English; 'ris' or 'risse' is an old preterite of 'to rise;' 'to axe' is not a mispronunciation of 'to ask,' but a genuine English form of the word, the form which in the earlier English it constantly assumed; in Wiclif's Bible almost without exception; and indeed 'axe' occurs continually, I know not whether invariably, in Tyndale's translation of the Scriptures; there was a time when 'ye' was an accusative, and to have used it as a nominative or vocative, the only permitted uses at present, would have been incorrect. Even such phrases as "Put *them* things away," or "The man *what* owns the horse," are not bad, but only antiquated English.* Saying this, I would not in the least imply that these forms are open to you to employ, or that they would be good English *for you*. They would not; inasmuch as

* Génin (*Récréations Philologiques*, vol. i. p. 71) says to the same effect: "Il n'y a guères de faute de Français, je dis faute générale, accréditée, qui n'ait sa raison d'être, et ne pût au besoin produire ses lettres de noblesse; et souvent mieux en règle que celles des locutions qui ont usurpé leur place au soleil."

they are contrary to present use and custom, and these must be our standards in what we speak, and in what we write; just as in our buying and selling we are bound to employ the current coin of the realm, must not attempt to pass that which long since has been called in, whatever merits or intrinsic value it may possess. All which I affirm is that the phrases just brought forward represent past stages of the language, and are not barbarous violations of it.

The same may be asserted of certain ways of pronouncing words, which are now in use among the lower classes, but not among the higher; as, for example, 'contrāry,' 'mischiēvous,' 'blasphēmous,' instead of 'contrăry,' 'mischiĕvous,' 'blasphĕmous.' It would be abundantly easy to show by a multitude of quotations from our poets, and those reaching very far down, that these are merely the retention of the earlier pronunciation by the people, after the higher classes have abandoned it.* And on the strength of what has just been spoken, let me here suggest to you how well worth your while it will prove to be on the watch for provincial words and inflexions, local idioms and modes of pronunciation, and to take note of these. Count nothing in this kind beneath your notice. Do not at once ascribe anything which you hear to the ignorance or stupidity of the speaker. Thus

* A single proof may in each case suffice:

"Our wills and fates do so *contráry* run."—*Shakespeare.*

"Ne let *mischiévous* witches with their charms."—*Spenser.*

"O argument *blasphémous*, false and proud."—*Milton.*

if you hear 'nuncheon,' do not at once set it down for a malformation of 'luncheon,'* nor 'yeel'†

* I cannot doubt that this form which our country people in Hampshire, as in many other parts, always employ, either retains the original pronunciation, our received one being a modern corruption; or else, as is more probable, that *we* have made a confusion between two originally different words, from which they have kept clear. Thus in Howell's *Vocabulary*, 1659, and in Cotgrave's *French and English Dictionary*, both words occur: "nuncion or nuncheon, the afternoon's repast," (cf. *Hudibras*, i. 1, 346: "They took their breakfasts or their *nuncheons*,") and "lunchion, a big piece" *i.e.* of bread; for both give the old French 'caribot,' which has this meaning, as the equivalent of 'luncheon.' It is clear that in this sense of lump or 'big piece' Gay uses 'luncheon:'

"When hungry thou stood'st staring like an oaf,
I sliced the *luncheon* from the barley loaf;"

and Miss Baker in her *Northamptonshire Glossary* explains 'lunch' as "a large lump of bread, or other edible; 'He helped himself to a good *lunch* of cake.'" We may note further that this 'nuntion' may possibly put us on the right track for arriving at the etymology of the word. Richardson has called attention to the fact that it is spelt "noon-shun" in Browne's *Pastorals*, which must at least suggest as possible and plausible that the 'nuntion' was originally applied to the labourer's slight meal, to which he withdrew for the *shunning* of the heat of the middle *noon*: especially when in Lancashire we find a word of similar formation, 'noon-scape,' and in Norfolk 'noon-miss,' for the time when labourers rest after dinner. It is at any rate certain that the dignity to which 'lunch' or 'luncheon' has now arrived, as when we read in the newspapers of a "magnificent *luncheon*," is altogether modern; the word belonged a century ago to rustic life, and in literature had not travelled beyond the "hobnailed pastorals" which professed to describe that life.

† See it so written, Holland's *Pliny*, vol. ii. p. 428, and often.

of 'eel.' Lists and collections of provincial usage, such as I have suggested, always have their value. If you are not able to turn them to any profit yourselves, and they may not stand in close enough connexion with your own studies for this, yet there always are those who will thank you for them; and to whom the humblest of these collections, carefully and intelligently made, will be in one way or other of real assistance.* And there is the more need to urge this at the present, because, notwithstanding the tenacity with which our country folk cling to their old forms and usages, still these forms and usages must now be rapidly growing fewer; and there are forces, moral and material, at work in England, which will probably cause that of those which now survive the greater part will within the next fifty years have disappeared.

Before quitting this subject, let me instance one example more of that which is commonly accounted ungrammatical usage, but which is really the retention of old grammar by some, where others have substituted new; I mean the constant application by our rustic population in the south, and I dare say through all parts of England, of 'his' to inanimate objects, and to these not personified, no

* As a proof of the excellent service which an accurate acquaintance with provincial usages may render in the investigation of the innumerable perplexing phenomena of the English language, I would refer to the admirable article *On English Pronouns Personal* in *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i. p. 277.

less than to persons; where 'its' would be employed by others. This was once the manner of speech among all; for 'its' is a word of very recent introduction, many would be surprised to learn of how recent introduction, into the language. You will look for it in vain through the whole of our Authorized Version of the Bible; the office which it now fulfils being there accomplished, as our rustics accomplish it at the present, by 'his' (Gen. i. 11; Exod. xxxvii. 17; Matt. v. 15) or 'her' (Jon. i. 15; Rev. xxii. 2) applied as freely to inanimate things as to persons, or else by 'thereof' (Ps. lxv. 10) or 'of it' (Dan. vii. 5). Nor may Lev. xxv. 5 be urged as invalidating this assertion; for reference to the exemplar edition of 1611, or indeed to any earlier editions of King James' Bible, will show that in them the passage stood, "of *it* own accord."* 'Its' occurs very rarely in Shakespeare, in many of his plays it will not once be found. Milton also for the most part avoids it, and this, though in his time others freely allowed it. How soon all this was forgotten we

* This last very curious usage, which served as a kind of stepping-stone to 'its,' and of which another example occurs in the Geneva Version (Acts xii. 10), and three or four in Shakespeare, has been abundantly illustrated by those who have lately written on the early history of the word 'its;' thus see Craik, *On the English of Shakespeare*, p. 91; Marsh, *Manual of the English Language* (Eng. Edit.), p. 278; *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i. p. 280; and my book *On the Authorized Version of the New Testament*, p. 59.

have striking evidence in the fact that when Dryden, in one of his fault-finding moods with the great men of the preceding generation, is taking Ben Jonson to task for general inaccuracy in his English diction, among other counts of his indictment, he quotes this line from *Catiline*

"Though heaven should speak with all *his* wrath at once,"

and proceeds, "*heaven* is ill syntax with *his*;" while in fact up to within forty or fifty years o the time when Dryden began to write, no other syntax was known; and to a much later date was exceedingly rare. Curious also, is it to note that in the earnest controversy which followed on Chatterton's publication of the poems ascribed by him to a monk Rowlie, who should have lived in the fifteenth century, no one appealed to such lines as the following,

"Life and all *its* goods I scorn,"

as at once deciding that the poems were not of the age which they pretended. Warton, who denied, though with some hesitation, the antiquity of the poems, giving many and sufficient reasons for this denial, failed to take note of this little word; while yet there needed no more than to point it out, for the disposing of the whole question; the forgery at once was betrayed.

What has been here affirmed concerning our provincial English, namely that it is often *old* English rather than *bad* English, may be affirmed with equal right of many so called Americanisms. There are parts of America where 'het' is used,

or was used a few years since, as the perfect of 'to heat;' 'holp' as the perfect of 'to help;' 'stricken' as the participle of 'to strike.' Again, there are words which have become obsolete here during the last two hundred years, which have not become obsolete there, although many of them probably retain only a provincial existence. Thus 'slick,' which indeed is only another form of 'sleek,' was employed by our good writers of the seventeenth century.* Other words again, which have remained current on both sides of the Atlantic, have yet on our side receded from their original use, while they have remained true to it on the other. 'Plunder' is a word in point.

In the contemplation of facts like these it has been sometimes asked, whether a day will ever arrive when the language spoken on this side of the Atlantic and on the other, will divide into two languages, an old English and a new. We may confidently answer, No. Doubtless, if those who went out from us to people and subdue a new continent, had left our shores two or three centuries earlier than they did, when the language was very much farther removed from that ideal after which it was unconsciously striving, and in which, once reached, it has in great measure acquiesced; if they had not carried with them to their distant homes their English Bible, and what else of

* Thus Fuller (*Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, vol. ii. p. 190): "Sure I am this city [the New Jerusalem] as presented by the prophet, was fairer, finer, *slicker*, smoother, more exact, than any fabric the earth afforded."

worth had been already uttered in the English tongue; if, having once left us, the intercourse between Old and New England had been entirely broken off, or only rare and partial; there would then have unfolded themselves differences between the language spoken here and there, which in tract of time accumulating and multiplying, might in the end have justified the regarding of the languages as no longer one and the same. It could not have failed but that such differences should have displayed themselves; for while there is a law of *necessity* in the evolution of languages, while they pursue certain courses and in certain directions, from which they can be no more turned aside by the will of men than one of the heavenly bodies could be pushed from its orbit by any engines of ours, there is a law of *liberty* no less; and this liberty must inevitably have made itself in many ways felt. In the political and social condition of America, so far removed from our own, in the many natural objects which are not the same with those which surround us here, in efforts independently carried out to rid the language of imperfections, or to unfold its latent powers, even in the different effects of soil and climate on the organs of speech, there would have been causes enough to have provoked in the course of time not immaterial divergencies of language.

As it is, however, the joint operation of those three causes referred to already, namely, that the separation did not take place in the infancy or youth of the language, but only in its ripe man-

hood, that England and America owned a body of literature, to which they alike looked up and appealed as containing the authoritative standards of the language, that the intercourse between the one people and the other has been large and frequent, hereafter probably to be larger and more frequent still, has effectually wrought. It has been strong enough so to traverse, repress, and check all those causes which tended to divergence, that the *written* language of educated men on both sides of the water remains precisely the same, their *spoken* manifesting a few trivial differences of idiom; while even among those classes which do not consciously acknowledge any ideal standard of language, there are scarcely greater differences, in some respects far smaller, than exist between inhabitants of different provinces in this one island of England; and in the future we may reasonably anticipate that these differences, so far from multiplying, will rather diminish and disappear.

But I must return from this long digression. It seems often as if an almost unaccountable caprice presided over the fortunes of words, and determined which should live and which die. Thus in instances out of number a word lives on as a verb, but has ceased to be employed as a noun; we say 'to embarrass,' but no longer an 'embarrass;' 'to revile,' but not, with Chapman and Milton, a 'revile;' 'to dispose,' but not a 'dispose;' 'to retire' but not a 'retire;' 'to wed,' but not a 'wed;' we say 'to infest,' but use no

longer the adjective 'infest.' Or with a reversed fortune a word lives on as a noun, but has perished as a verb—thus as a noun substantive, a 'slug,' but no longer 'to slug' or render slothful; a 'child,' but no longer 'to child,' ("*childing* autumn," Shakespeare); a 'rape,' but not 'to rape' (South); a 'rogue,' but not 'to rogue;' 'malice,' but not 'to malice;' a 'path,' but not 'to path;' or as a noun adjective, 'serene,' but not 'to serene,' a beautiful word, which we have let go, as the French have 'sereiner;'* 'meek,' but not 'to meek' (Wiclif); 'fond,' but not 'to fond' (Dryden); 'dead,' but not 'to dead;' 'intricate,' but 'to intricate' (Jeremy Taylor) no longer.

Or again, the affirmative remains, but the negative is gone; thus 'wisdom,' 'bold,' 'sad,' but not any more 'unwisdom,' 'unbold,' 'unsad' (all in Wiclif); 'cunning,' but not 'uncunning;' 'manhood,' 'wit,' 'mighty,' 'tall,' but not 'unmanhood,' 'unwit,' 'unmighty,' 'untall' (all in Chaucer); 'buxom,' but not 'unbuxom' (Dryden); 'hasty,' but not 'unhasty' (Spenser); 'blithe,'

* How many words modern French has lost which are most vigorous and admirable, the absence of which can only now be supplied by a circumlocution or by some less excellent word—'Oseur,' 'affranchisseur' (Amyot), 'mépriseur,' 'murmurateur,' 'blandisseur' (Bossuet), 'abuseur' (Rabelais), 'désabusement,' 'rancœur,' are all obsolete at the present. So 'désaimer,' to cease to love ('disamare' in Italian), 'guirlander,' 'stériliser,' 'blandissant,' 'ordonnément' (Montaigne), with innumerable others.

but not 'unblithe;' 'ease,' but not 'unease' (Hacket); 'repentance,' but not 'unrepentance;' 'remission,' but not 'irremission' (Donne); 'science,' but not 'nescience' (Glanvill); 'to know,' but not 'to unknow' (Wiclif); 'to give,' but not 'to ungive.' Or once more, with a curious variation from this, the negative survives, while the affirmative is gone; thus 'wieldy' (Chaucer) survives only in 'unwieldy; 'couth' and 'couthly' (both in Spenser), only in 'uncouth' and 'uncouthly;' 'ruly' (Foxe) only 'in unruly;' 'gainly' (Henry More) in 'ungainly;' these last two were both of them serviceable words, and have been ill lost; 'gainly' is indeed still common in the West Riding of Yorkshire; 'exorable' (Holland) and 'evitable' only in 'inexorable' and 'inevitable;' 'faultless' remains, but hardly 'faultful' (Shakespeare). In like manner 'semble' (Foxe) has, except as a technical law term, disappeared; while 'dissemble' continues. So also of other pairs one has been taken and one left; 'height,' or 'highth,' as Milton better spelt it, remains, but 'lowth' (Becon) is gone; 'righteousness,' or 'rightwiseness,' as it would once more accurately have been written, for 'righteous' is a corruption of 'rightwise,' remains, but its correspondent 'wrongwiseness' has been taken; 'inroad' continues, but 'outroad' (Holland) has disappeared; 'levant' lives, but 'ponent' (Holland) has died; 'to extricate' continues, but, as we saw just now, 'to intricate' does not; 'parricide,' but not 'filicide' (Holland). Again, of whole groups of words

formed on some particular scheme it may be only a single specimen will survive. Thus 'gainsay,' that is, again say, survives; but 'gainstrive' (Foxe), 'gainstand,' 'gaincope' (Golding), and other similarly formed words exist no longer. It is the same with 'foolhardy,' which is but one, though now indeed the only one remaining, of at least five adjectives formed on the same principle; thus 'foollarge,' quite as expressive a word as prodigal, occurs in Chaucer, and 'foolhasty,' found also in him, lived on to the time of Holland; while 'foolhappy' is in Spenser; and 'foolbold' in Bale. 'Steadfast' remains, but 'shamefast,' 'rootfast,' 'bedfast' (=bedridden), 'homefast,' 'housefast,' 'masterfast' (Skelton), with others, are all gone. 'Exhort' remains; but 'dehort,' a word whose place neither 'dissuade' nor any other exactly supplies, has escaped us. We have 'twilight,' but 'twibill' = bipennis (Chapman) is extinct.

Let me mention another real loss, where in like manner there remains in the present language something to remind us of that which is gone. The comparative 'rather' stands alone, having dropped on one side its positive 'rathe,' and on the other its superlative 'rathest.' 'Rathe,' having the sense of early, though a graceful word, and not fallen quite out of popular remembrance, inasmuch as it is embalmed in the *Lycidas* of Milton,

> "And the *rathe* primrose, which forsaken dies,

might still be suffered without remark to share

the common lot of so many words which have perished, though worthy to have lived; but the disuse of 'rathest' has left a real gap in the language, and the more so, seeing that 'liefest' is gone too. 'Rather' expresses the Latin 'potius;' but 'rathest', being out of use, we have no word, unless 'soonest' may be accepted as such, to express 'potissimum,' or the preference not of one way over another or over certain others, but of one over all; which we therefore effect by aid of various circumlocutions. Nor has 'rathest' been so long out of use, that it would be playing the antic to attempt to revive it. It occurs in the *Sermons* of Bishop Sanderson, who in the opening of that beautiful sermon from the text, "When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up," puts the consideration, "why these," that is, father and mother, "are named the *rathest*, and the rest to be included in them."*

It is sometimes easy enough, but indeed oftener hard, and not seldom quite impossible, to trace the causes which have been at work to bring about that certain words, little by little, drop out of the language of men, come to be heard more and more rarely, and finally are not heard any more at all —to trace the motives which have induced a whole people thus to arrive at a tacit consent not to employ them any longer; for without this tacit consent they could never have thus become obsolete.

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* For other passages in which 'rathest' occurs, see the *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 92, 170.

That it is not accident, that there is a law here at work, however hidden it may be from us, is plain from the fact that certain families of words, words formed on certain patterns, have a tendency thus to fall into desuetude.

Thus, I think, we may trace a tendency in words ending in 'some,' the Anglo-Saxon and early English 'sum,' the German 'sam' ('friedsam,' 'seltsam') to fall out of use. It is true that a vast number of these survive, as 'gladsome,' 'handsome,' 'wearisome,' 'buxom' (this last spelt better 'bucksome,' by our earlier writers, for its present spelling altogether disguises its true character, and the family to which it belongs; being the same word as the German 'beugsam' or 'biegsam,' bendable, compliant); but a larger number of these words than can be ascribed to accident, many more than the due proportion of them, are either quite or nearly extinct. Thus in Wiclif's Bible alone you might note the following, 'lovesum,' 'hatesum,' 'lustsum,' 'gilsum' (guilesome), 'wealsum,' 'heavysum,' 'lightsum,' 'delightsum;' of these 'lightsome' long survived, and indeed still survives in provincial dialects; but of the others all save 'delightsome' are gone; and that, although used in our Authorized Version (Mal. iii. 12), is now only employed in poetry. So too 'mightsome' (see Coleridge's *Glossary*), 'brightsome,' (Marlowe), 'wieldsome,' and 'unwieldsome' (Golding), 'unlightsome' (Milton), 'healthsome' (*Homilies*), 'ugsome' and 'ugglesome' (both in Foxe), 'laboursome' (Shakespeare), 'friendsome,'

'longsome' (Bacon), 'quietsome,' 'mirksome' (both in Spenser), 'toothsome' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'gleesome,' 'joysome' (both in Browne's *Pastorals*), 'gaysome' (*Mirror for Magistrates*), 'roomsome,' 'bigsome,' 'awsome,' 'timersome,' 'winsome,' 'viewsome,' 'dosome' (=prosperous), 'flaysome' (=fearful), 'auntersome' (=adventurous), 'clamorsome' (all these still surviving in the North), 'playsome' (employed by the historian Hume), 'lissome,' have nearly or quite disappeared from our English speech. They seem to have held their ground in Scotland in considerably larger numbers than in the south of the Island.*

Neither can I esteem it a mere accident that of a group of depreciatory and contemptuous words ending in 'ard,' at least one half should have dropped out of use; I refer to that group of which 'dotard,' 'laggard,' 'braggard,' now spelt 'braggart,' 'sluggard,' 'buzzard,' 'bastard,' 'wizard,' may be taken as surviving specimens; 'blinkard' (*Homilies*), 'dizzard' (Burton), 'dullard' (Udal), 'musard' (Chaucer), 'trichard' (*Political Songs*), 'shreward' (Robert of Glouceste), 'ballard' (a bald-headed man, Wiclif); 'puggard,' 'stinkard' (Ben Jonson), 'haggard,' a worthless hawk, as extinct.

Thus too there is a very curious province of our

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* Jamieson's *Dictionary* gives a large number of words with this termination which I should suppose were always peculiar to Scotland, as 'bangsome,' *i.e.* quarrelsome, 'freaksome,' 'drysome,' 'grousome' (the German 'grausam').

language, in which we were once so rich, that extensive losses here have failed to make us poor; so many of its words still surviving, even after as many or more have disappeared. I refer to those double words which either contain within themselves a strong rhyming modulation, such for example as 'willy-nilly,' 'hocus-pocus,' 'helter-skelter,' 'tag-rag,' 'namby-pamby,' 'pell-mell,' 'hodge-podge;' or with a slight difference from this, though belonging to the same group, those of which the characteristic feature is not this internal likeness with initial unlikeness, but initial likeness with internal unlikeness; not rhyming, but strongly alliterative, and in every case with a change of the interior vowel from a weak into a strong, generally from *i* into *a* or *o*; as 'shilly-shally,' 'mingle-mangle,' 'tittle-tattle,' 'prittle-prattle,' 'riff-raff,' 'see-saw,' 'slip-slop.' No one who is not quite out of love with the homelier yet more vigorous portions of the language, but will acknowledge the life and strength which there is often in these and in others still current among us. But of the same sort what vast numbers have fallen out of use, some so fallen out of all remembrance that it may be difficult almost to find credence for them. Thus take of rhyming the following: 'hugger-mugger,' 'hurly-burly,' 'kicksy-wicksy' (all in Shakespeare); 'hibber-gibber,' 'rusty-dusty,' 'horrel-lorrel,' 'slaump-paump' (all in Gabriel Harvey), 'royster-doyster' (Old Play), 'hoddy-doddy' (Ben Jonson); while of alliterative might be instanced these: 'skimble-

skamble,' 'bibble-babble' (both in Shakespeare), 'twittle-twattle,' 'kim-kam' (both in Holland), 'hab-nab' (Lilly), 'trim-tram,' 'trish-trash,' 'swish-swash' (all in Gabriel Harvey), 'whim-wham' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'mizz-mazz' (Locke), 'snip-snap' (Pope), 'flim-flam' (Swift), 'tric-trac,' and others.

Again, there was once a whole family of words, whereof the greater number are now under ban; which seemed at one time to have been formed almost at pleasure, the only condition being that the combination should be a happy one—I mean all those singularly expressive words formed by a combination of verb and substantive, the former governing the latter; as 'telltale,' 'scapegrace,' 'turncoat,' 'turntail,' 'skinflint,' 'spendthrift,' 'spitfire,' 'lickspittle,' 'daredevil' (=wagehals), 'makebate' (=störenfried), 'marplot,' 'killjoy.' These with a certain number of others, have held their ground, and may be said to be still more or less in use; but what a number more are forgotten; and yet, though not always elegant, they constituted a very vigorous portion of our language, and preserved some of its most genuine idioms.* It could not well be otherwise; they

* Many languages have groups of words formed upon the same scheme, although, singularly enough, they are altogether absent from the Anglo-Saxon. (J. Grimm, *Deutsche Gramm.*, vol. ii. p. 976.) The Spaniards have a great many very expressive words of this formation. Thus with allusion to the great struggle in which Christian Spain was engaged for so many centuries, a vaunting braggart is a 'matamoros,' a

are almost all words of abuse, and the abusive words of a language are always among the most picturesque and vigorous and imaginative which it possesses. The whole man speaks out in them, and often the man under the influence of passion and excitement, which always lend force and fire to his speech. Let me remind you of a few of them; 'smellfeast,' if not a better, is yet a more graphic, word than our foreign parasite; as graphic indeed for us as τρεχέδειπνος to Greek ears; 'clawback' (Hacket) is a stronger, if not a more graceful, word than flatterer or sycophant; 'toss-pot' (Fuller), or less frequently 'reel-pot' (Middleton), tells its own tale as well as drunkard; and 'pinchpenny' (Holland), or 'nipfarthing' (Drant), as well as or better than miser. And then what a multitude more there are in like kind; 'spin-text,' 'lacklatin,' 'mumblematins,' all applied to ignorant clerics; 'bitesheep' (a favourite word with Foxe) to such of these as were rather wolves tearing, than shepherds feeding, the flock; 'slip-string' =pendard (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'slip-gibbet,' 'scapegallows;' all names given to those who, however they might have escaped, were justly owed to the gallows, and might still "go upstairs to bed."

How many of these words occur in Shakespeare. The following list makes no pretence to

'slaymoor;' he is a 'matasiete,' a 'slayseven;' a 'perdonavidas,' a 'sparelives.' Others may be added to these, as 'azotacalles,' 'picapleytos,' 'saltaparedes,' 'rompeesquinas,' 'ganapan,' 'cascatreguas.'

completeness; 'martext,' 'carrytale,' 'pleaseman,' 'sneakcup,' 'mumblenews,' 'wantwit,' 'lackbrain,' 'lackbeard,' 'lacklove,' 'ticklebrain,' 'cutpurse,' 'cutthroat,' 'crackhemp,' 'breedbate,' 'swingebuckler,' 'pickpurse,' 'pickthank,' 'picklock,' 'scarecrow,' 'breakvow,' 'breakpromise,' 'makepeace'—this last and 'telltruth' (Fuller) being the only ones in the whole collection, wherein reprobation or contempt is not implied. Nor is the list exhausted yet; there are further 'dingthrift' = prodigal (Herrick), 'wastegood' (Cotgrave), 'stroygood' (Golding), 'wastethrift' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'scapethrift,' 'swashbuckler' (both in Holinshed), 'shakebuckler,' 'rinsepitcher' (both in Becon), 'crackrope' (Howell), 'waghalter,' 'wagfeather' (both in Cotgrave), 'blabtale' (Hacket), 'getnothing' (Adams), 'findfault' (Florio), 'tearthroat' (Gayton), 'marprelate,' 'spitvenom,' 'nipcheese,' 'nipscreed,' 'killman' (Chapman), 'lackland,' 'pickquarrel,' 'pickfaults,' 'pickpenny' (Henry More), 'makefray' (Bishop Hall), 'makedebate' (Richardson's *Letters*), 'kindlecoal' (attise feu), 'kindlefire' (both in Gurnall), 'turntippet' (Cranmer), 'swillbowl' (Stubbs), 'smellsmock,' 'cumberwold' (Drayton), 'curryfavor,' 'pinchfist,' 'suckfist,' 'hatepeace' (Sylvester), 'hategood' (Bunyan), 'clutchfist,' 'sharkgull' (both in Middleton), 'makesport' (Fuller), 'hangdog' ("Herod's *hangdogs* in the tapestry," Pope), 'catchpoll,' 'makeshift' (used not impersonally, as now), 'pickgoose' ("the bookworm was never but a *pickgoose*"), 'killcow' (these three last in Gabriel

Harvey), 'rakeshame' (Milton, prose), with others which it will be convenient to omit. 'Rakehell,' which used to be spelt 'rakel' or 'rakle' (Chaucer), a good English word, would be only through an error included in this list, although Cowper, when he writes 'rakehell' ("*rake-hell* baronet") evidently regarded it as belonging to this group.*

Perhaps one of the most frequent causes which leads to the disuse of words is this: in some inexplicable way there comes to be attached something of ludicrous, or coarse, or vulgar to them, out of a feeling of which they are no longer used in earnest serious writing, and at the same time fall out of the discourse of those who desire to speak elegantly. Not indeed that this degradation which overtakes words is in all cases inexplicable. The unheroic character of most men's minds, with their consequent intolerance of that heroic which they cannot understand, is constantly at work, too often with success, in taking down words of nobleness from their high pitch; and, as the most effectual way of doing this, in casting an air of mock-heroic about them. Thus 'to dub,' a word resting on one of the noblest usages of chivalry, has now something of ludicrous about it; so too has 'doughty;' they belong to that serio-comic, mock-heroic diction, the multi-

* The mistake is far earlier; long before Cowper wrote the sound suggested first this sense, and then this spelling. Thus Stanihurst, *Description of Ireland*, p. 28: "They are taken for no better than *rakehels*, or *the devil's black guard*;" and often elsewhere.

plication of which, as of all parodies on greatness, and the favour with which it is received, is always a sign of evil augury for a nation, is at present a sign of evil augury for our own.

'Pate' in the sense of head is now comic or ignoble; it was not so once; as is plain from its occurrence in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms (Ps. vii. 17); as little was 'noddle,' which occurs in one of the few poetical passages in Hawes. The same may be said of 'sconce,' in this sense at least; of 'nowl' or 'noll,' which Wiclif uses; of 'slops' for trousers (Marlowe's *Lucan*); of 'cocksure' (Rogers), of 'smug,' which once meant no more than adorned ("the *smug* bridegroom," Shakespeare). 'To nap' is now a word without dignity; while yet in Wiclif's Bible it is said, "Lo he schall not *nappe*, nether slepe that kepeth Israel" (Ps. cxxi. 4). 'To punch,' 'to thump,' both which, and in serious writing, occur in Spenser, could not now obtain the same use, nor yet 'to wag,' or 'to buss.' Neither would any one now say that at Lystra Barnabas and Paul "rent their clothes and *skipped out* among the people" (Acts xiv. 14), which is the language that Wiclif employs; nor yet that "the Lord *trounced* Sisera and all his host" as it stands in the Bible of 1551. "A *sight* of angels," for which phrase see Cranmer's Bible (Heb. xii. 22), would be felt as a vulgarism now. We should scarcely call now a delusion of Satan a "*flam* of the devil" (Henry More). It is not otherwise in regard of phrases. "Through thick and thin," occurring

in Spenser, 'cheek by jowl' in Dubartas, do not now belong to serious poetry. In the glorious ballad of *Chevy Chase,* a noble warrior whose legs are hewn off, is described as being "in doleful dumps;" just as, in Holland's *Livy,* the Romans are set forth as being "in the dumps" as a consequence of their disastrous defeat at Cannæ. In Golding's *Ovid,* one fears that he will "go to pot." In one of the beautiful letters of John Careless, preserved in Foxe's *Martyrs,* a persecutor, who expects a recantation from him, is described as "in the wrong box." And in the sermons of Barrow, who certainly intended to write an elevated style, and did not seek familiar, still less vulgar, expressions, we constantly meet such terms as 'to rate,' 'to snub,' 'to gull,' 'to pudder,' 'dumpish,' and the like; which we may confidently affirm were not vulgar when he used them.

Then too the advance of refinement causes words to be foregone, which are felt to speak too plainly. It is not here merely that one age has more delicate ears than another; and that matters are freely spoken of at one time which at another are withdrawn from conversation. This is something; but besides this, and even if this delicacy were at a standstill, there would still be a continual process going on, by which the words, which for a certain while have been employed to designate coarse or disagreeable facts or things, would be disallowed, or at all events relinquished to the lower classes of society, and others adopted in their place. The former by long use being felt

to have come into too direct and close relation with that which they designate, to summon it up too distinctly before the mind's eye, they are thereupon exchanged for others, which, at first at least, indicate more lightly and allusively the offensive thing, rather hint and suggest than paint and describe it: although by and bye these new will also in their turn be discarded, and for exactly the same reasons which brought about the dismissal of those which they themselves superseded. It lies in the necessity of things that I must leave this part of my subject, very curious as it is, without illustration.* But no one, even moderately acquainted with the early literature of the Reformation, can be ignorant of words freely used in it, which now are not merely coarse and as such under ban, but which no one would employ who did not mean to speak impurely and vilely.

Thus much in respect of the words, and the character of the words, which we have lost or let go. Of these, indeed, if a language, as it travels onwards, loses some, it also acquires others, and probably many more than it loses; they are leaves

* As not, however, turning on a *very* coarse matter, and illustrating the subject with infinite wit and humour, I might refer the Spanish scholar to the discussion between Don Quixote and his squire on the dismissal of 'regoldar,' from the language of good society, and the substitution of 'erutar' in its room (*Don Quixote*, 4. 7. 43). In a letter of Cicero to Pætus (*Fam.* ix. 22) there is a subtle and interesting disquisition on forbidden words, and their philosophy.

on the tree of language, of which if some fall away, a new succession takes their place. But it is not so, as I already observed, with the *forms* or *powers* of a language, that is, with the various inflections, moods, duplicate or triplicate formation of tenses; which the speakers of a language come gradually to perceive that they can do without, and therefore cease to employ; seeking to suppress grammatical intricacies, and to obtain grammatical simplicity and so far as possible a pervading uniformity, sometimes even at the hazard of letting go what had real worth, and contributed to the more lively, if not to the clearer, setting forth of the inner thought or feeling of the mind. Here there is only loss, with no compensating gain; or, at all events, diminution only, and never addition. In regard of these inner forces and potencies of a language, there is no creative energy at work in its later periods, in any, indeed, but quite the earliest. They are not as the leaves, but may be likened to the stem and leading branches of a tree, whose shape, mould and direction are determined at a very early stage of its growth; and which age, or accident, or violence may diminish, but which can never be multiplied. I have already slightly referred to a notable example of this, namely, to the dropping of the dual number in the Greek language. Thus in all the New Testament it does not once occur, having quite fallen out of the common dialect in which that is composed. Elsewhere too it has been felt that the dual was not worth preserving, or at any rate, that no

serious inconvenience would follow on its loss. There is no such number in the modern German, Danish or Swedish; in the old German and Norse there was.

How many niceties, delicacies, subtleties of language, *we*, speakers of the English tongue, in the course of centuries have got rid of; how bare (whether too bare is another question) we have stripped ourselves; what simplicity for better or for worse reigns in the present English, as compared with the old Anglo-Saxon. That had six declensions, our present English but one; that had three genders, English, if we except one or two words, has none; that formed the genitive in a variety of ways, we only in one; and the same fact meets us, wherever we compare the grammars of the two languages. At the same time, it can scarcely be repeated too often, that in the estimate of the gain or loss thereupon ensuing, we must by no means put certainly to loss everything which the language has dismissed, any more than everything to gain which it has acquired. It is no real wealth in a language to have needless and superfluous forms. They are often an embarrassment and an encumbrance to it rather than a help. The Finnish language has fourteen cases. Without pretending to know exactly what it is able to effect, I yet feel confident that it cannot effect more, nor indeed so much, with its fourteen as the Greek is able to do with its five. It therefore seems to me that some words of Otfried Müller, in many ways admirable, do yet exaggerate the

losses consequent on the reduction of the forms of a language. "It may be observed," he says, "that in the lapse of ages, from the time that the progress of language can be observed, grammatical forms, such as the signs of cases, moods and tenses have never been increased in number, but have been constantly diminishing. The history of the Romance, as well as of the Germanic, languages shows in the clearest manner how a grammar, once powerful and copious, has been gradually weakened and impoverished, until at last it preserves only a few fragments of its ancient inflections. Now there is no doubt that this luxuriance of grammatical forms is not an essential part of a language, considered merely as a vehicle of thought. It is well known that the Chinese language, which is merely a collection of radical words destitute of grammatical forms, can express even philosophical ideas with tolerable precision; and the English, which, from the mode of its formation by a mixture of different tongues, has been stripped of its grammatical inflections more completely than any other European language, seems, nevertheless, even to a foreigner, to be distinguished by its energetic eloquence. All this must be admitted by every unprejudiced inquirer; but yet it cannot be overlooked, that this copiousness of grammatical forms, and the fine shades of meaning which they express, evince a nicety of observation, and a faculty of distinguishing, which unquestionably prove that the race of mankind among whom these languages arose was characterized by a re-

markable correctness and subtlety of thought. Nor can any modern European, who forms in his mind a lively image of the classical languages in their ancient grammatical luxuriance, and compares them with his mother tongue, conceal from himself that, in the ancient languages the words, with their inflections, clothed as it were with muscles and sinews, come forward like living bodies, full of expression and character, while in the modern tongues the words seem shrunk up into mere skeletons."*

Whether languages are as much impoverished by this process as is here assumed, may, I think, be a question. I will endeavour to give you some materials which shall assist you in forming your own judgment in the matter. And here I am sure that I shall do best in considering not forms which the language has relinquished long ago, but mainly such as it is relinquishing now; which, touching us more nearly, will have a far more lively interest for us all. For example, the female termination which we employ in certain words, such as from 'heir' 'heiress,' from 'prophet' 'prophetess,' from 'sorcerer' 'sorceress,' was once far more widely extended than at present; the words which retain it are daily becoming fewer. It has already fallen away in so many, and is evidently becoming of less frequent use in so many others, that, if we may augur of the future from the analogy of the past, it will one day altogether vanish from our

* *Literature of Greece*, p. 5.

tongue. Thus all these occur in Wiclif's Bible; 'techeress' as the female teacher (2 Chron. xxxv. 25); 'friendess' (Prov. vii. 4); 'servantess' (Gen. xvi. 2); 'leperess' (=saltatrix, Ecclus. ix. 4); 'daunceress' (Ecclus. ix. 4); 'neighbouress' (Exod. iii. 22); 'sinneress' (Luke vii. 37); 'purpuress' (Acts xvi. 14); 'cousiness' (Luke i. 36); 'slayeress' (Tob. iii. 9); 'devouress' (Ezek. xxxvi. 13); 'spousess' (Prov. v. 19); thralless' (Jer. xxxiv. 16); 'dwelleress' (Jer. xxi. 13); 'waileress' (Jer. ix. 17); 'cheseress' (=electrix, Wisd. viii. 4); 'singeress,' 'breakeress,' 'waiteress,' this last indeed having recently come up again. Add to these 'chideress,' the female chider, 'herdess,' 'constabless,' 'moveress,' 'jangleress,' 'soudaness,' (=sultana), 'guideress;' 'charmeress' (all in Chaucer); and others, which however we may have now let them fall, reached to far later periods of the language; thus 'vanqueress' (Fabyan); 'poisoneress' (Greneway); 'knightess' (Udal); 'pedleress,' 'championess' 'vassaless,' 'avengeress,' 'warriouress,' 'victoress,' 'creatress' (all in Spenser); 'fornicatress,' 'cloistress,' 'jointress' (all in Shakespeare); 'vowess' (Holinshed); 'ministress,' 'flatteress' (both in Holland); 'captainess' (Sidney); 'saintess' (Sir T. Urquhart); 'heroess,' 'dragoness,' 'butleress,' 'contendress,' 'waggoness,' 'rectress' (all in Chapman); 'shootress' (Fairfax); 'archeress' (Fanshawe); 'clientess,' 'pandress' (both in Middleton); 'papess,' 'Jesuitess' (Bishop Hall); 'incitress' (Gayton); 'soldieress,' 'guardianess,' 'votaress' (all in Beaumont and Fletcher); 'com-

fortress,' 'fosteress' (Ben Jonson); 'soveraintess' (Sylvester); 'preserveress' (Daniel); 'solicitress,' 'impostress,' 'buildress,' 'intrudress' (all in Fuller); 'favouress' (Hakewell); 'commandress' (Burton); 'monarchess,' 'discipless' (Speed); 'auditress,' 'cateress,' 'chantress,' 'tyranness' (all in Milton); 'citess,' 'divineress' (both in Dryden); 'deaness' (Sterne); 'detractress' (Addison); 'hucksteress' (Howell); 'tutoress' (Shaftesbury); 'farmeress' (Lord Peterborough, *Letter to Pope*); 'laddess,' which however still survives in the contracted form of 'lass;' with more which, I doubt not, it would not be very hard to bring together.*

Exactly the same thing has happened with another feminine affix. I refer to 'ster,' taking the place of 'er' where a feminine doer is intended.† 'Spinner' and 'spinster' are the only pair of such words, which still survive. There were formerly many such; thus 'baker' had 'bakester,' being the female who baked: 'brewer, 'brewster;' 'sewer' 'sewster;' 'reader' 'readster;' 'seamer' 'seamster;' 'fruiterer' 'fruitester;' 'tumbler' 'tumblester;' 'hopper' 'hoppester' (these last three in Chaucer; "the shippes *hoppesteres,*" about which so much difficulty has been made, are the ships *dancing, i.e.*, on the waves),

* In Cotgrave's *Dictionary* I find 'praiseress,' 'commendress,' 'fluteress,' 'possesseress,' 'loveress,' but have never met them in use.

† On this termination see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Gramm.*, vol. ii. p. 134; vol. iii. p. 339.

'knitter' 'knitster, (a word, I am told, still alive in Devon). Add to these 'whitster' (female bleacher, Shakespeare), 'kempster' (pectrix), 'dry-ster' (siccatrix), 'brawdster, (I suppose embroi-deress), and 'salster' (salinaria).* It is a singular example of the richness of a language in forms at the earlier stages of its existence, that not a few of the words which had, as we have just seen, a feminine termination in 'ess,' had also a second in 'ster.' Thus 'daunser,' beside 'daunseress,' had also 'daunster' (Ecclus. ix. 4); 'wailer,' be-side 'waileress,' had 'wailster' (Jer. ix. 17); 'dweller' 'dwelster' (Jer. xxi. 13); and 'singer' 'singster' (2 Kin. xix. 35); so too, 'chider' had 'chidester' (Chaucer), as well as 'chideress,' 'slayer' 'slayster' (Tob. iii. 9), as well as 'slayeress,' 'chooser' 'chesister,' (Wisd. viii. 4), as well as 'cheseress,' with others that might be named.

It is difficult to understand how Marsh, with these examples before him should affirm, "I find no positive evidence to show that the termination 'ster' was ever regarded as a feminine termination in English." It may be, and indeed has been, urged that the existence of such words as 'seamstress,' 'song-stress,' is decisive proof that the ending 'ster' of itself was not counted sufficient to designate persons as female; for if, it has been said, 'seam*ster*' and 'song*ster*' had been felt to be already feminine, no one would have ever thought of doubling on

* I am indebted for these last four to a *Nominale* in the *National Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 216.

this, and adding a second female termination; 'seam*stress*,' 'song*stress*.' But all which can justly be concluded from hence is, that when this final 'ess' was added to these already feminine forms, and examples of it will not, I think, be found till a comparatively late period of the language, the true principle and law of the words had been lost sight of and forgotten.* The same may be affirmed of such other of these feminine forms as are now applied to men, such as 'gamester,' 'youngster,' 'oldster,' 'drugster' (South), 'huckster,' 'hackster,' (= swordsman, Milton, prose), 'teamster,' 'throwster,' 'rhymester,' 'punster' (*Spectator*), 'tapster,' 'whipster' (Shakespeare), 'trickster.' Either like 'teamster,' and 'punster,' the words first came into being, when the true significance of this form was altogether lost;† or like 'tapster,' which was female in

* The earliest example which Richardson gives of 'seamstress' is from Gay, of 'songstress,' from Thomson. I find however 'sempstress' in the translation of Olearius' *Voyages and Travels*, 1669, p. 43. It is quite certain that as late as Ben Jonson, 'seamster' and 'songster' expressed the *female* seamer and singer; a single passage from his *Masque of Christmas* is evidence to this. One of the children of Christmas there is "Wassel, like a neat *sempster* and *songster*; *her* page bearing a brown bowl." Compare a passage from *Holland's Leaguer*, 1632: "A *tyre-woman* of phantastical ornaments, a *sempster* for ruffes, cuffes, smocks and waistcoats."

† This was about the time of Henry VIII. In proof of the confusion which reigned on the subject in Shakespeare's time, see his use of 'spinster' as = 'spinner,' the *man* spin-

Chaucer ("the gay *tapstere*"), as it is still in Dutch and Frisian, and distinguished from 'tapper,' the *man* who keeps the inn, or has charge of the tap, or as 'bakester,' at this day used in Scotland for 'baker,' as 'dyester' for 'dyer,' the word did originally belong of right and exclusively to women; but with the gradual transfer of the occupation to men, and an increasing forgetfulness of what this termination implied, there went also a transfer of the name,* just as in other words, and out of the same causes, the exact converse has found place; and 'baker' or 'brewer,' not 'bakester' or 'brewster,' would be now in

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ning, *Henry VIII.*, Act i. Sc. 2; and I have no doubt that it is the same in *Othello*, Act i. Sc. 1. And a little later, in Howell's *Vocabulary*, 1659, 'spinner' and 'spinster' are *both* referred to the male sex, and the barbarous 'spinstress' invented for the female.

* I have included 'huckster,' as will be observed, in this list. I certainly cannot produce any passage in which it is employed as the *female* pedler. We have only, however, to keep in mind the existence of the verb 'to huck,' in the sense of to peddle (it is used by Bishop Andrews), and at the same time not to let the present spelling of 'hawker' mislead us, and we shall confidently recognize 'hucker' (the German 'höker' or 'höcker'), in hawker, that is, the *man* who 'hucks,' 'hawks,' or peddles, as in 'huckster' the *female* who does the same. When therefore Howell and others employ 'hucksteress,' they fall into the same barbarous excess of expression, whereof we are all guilty, when we use 'seamstress' and 'songstress.'—The note stood thus in the third edition. Since that was published, I have met in the *Nominale* referred to p. 158, the following, "hæc auxiatrix, a *hukster*."

England applied to the woman baking or brewing. So entirely has this power of the language died out, that it survives more apparently than really even in 'spinner' and 'spinster;' seeing that 'spinster' has obtained now quite another meaning than that of a woman spinning, whom, as well as the man, we should call not a 'spinster,' but a 'spinner.'* It would indeed be hard to believe, if we had not constant experience of the fact, how soon and how easily the true law and significance of some form, which has never ceased to be in everybody's mouth, may yet be lost sight of by all. No more curious chapter in the history of language could be written than one which should trace the violations of analogy, the transgressions of the most primary laws of a language, which follow hereupon; the plurals like 'welkin' (=wolken, the clouds), 'chicken,'† which are dealt with as singulars, the singulars, like 'riches' (richesse),‡

* *Notes and Queries*, No. 157.

† When Wallis wrote, it was only beginning to be forgotten that 'chick' was the singular, and 'chicken' the plural: "*Sunt qui dicunt* in singulari 'chicken,' et in plurali 'chickens;'" and even now the words are in many country parts correctly employed. In Sussex, a correspondent writes, they would as soon think of saying 'oxens' as 'chickens.'

‡ See Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1032, where Richesse, "an high lady of great noblesse," is one of the persons of the allegory; and compare Rev. xviii. 17, Authorized Version. This has so entirely escaped the knowledge of Ben Jonson, English scholar as he was, that in his *Grammar* he cites 'riches' as an example of an English word wanting a singular.

'pease' (pisum, pois),* 'alms,' 'eaves,' which are assumed to be plurals.

There is one example of this, familiar to us all; probably so familiar that it would not be worth while adverting to it, if it did not illustrate, as no other word could, this forgetfulness which may overtake a whole people, of the true meaning of a grammatical form which they have never ceased to employ. I refer to the mistaken assumption that the 's' of the genitive, as 'the king's countenance,' was merely a more rapid way of pronouncing 'the king *his* countenance,' and that the final 's' in 'king's' was in fact an elided 'his.' This explanation for a long time prevailed almost universally; I believe there are many who accept it still. It was in vain that here and there a deeper knower of our tongue protested against this "monstrous syntax," as Ben Jonson in his *Grammar* justly calls it.† It was in vain that Wallis, another English scholar of the seventeenth century, pointed out in *his* Grammar that the slightest examination of the facts revealed the untenable character of this explanation, seeing that we do not merely say "the *king's* countenance," but "the *queen's* countenance;" and in this case the final 's' cannot stand for 'his,' for "the queen

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"Set shallow brooks to surging seas,
An orient pearl to a white *pease*."
Puttenham.

† It is curious that despite of this protest, one of his plays has for its name, *Sejanus his Fall.*

his countenance" cannot be intended ;* we do not say merely "the *child's* bread," but "the *children's* bread," where it is no less impossible to resolve the phrase into " the children *his* bread."† Despite of these protests the error held its ground. This much indeed of a plea it could make for itself, that such an actual employment of 'his' *had* found its way into the language, as early as the fourteenth century, and had been in occasional, though rare use, from that time downward.‡ Yet this, which has only been elicited by the researches of recent scholars, does not in the least

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* Even this does not startle Addison, or cause him any misgiving; on the contrary he boldly asserts (*Spectator*, No. 135), "The same single letter 's' on many occasions does the office of a whole word, and represents the 'his' *or* '*her*' of our forefathers."

† Nothing can be better than the way in which Wallis disposes of this scheme, although less successful in showing what this 's' does mean than in showing what it cannot mean (*Gramm. Ling. Anglic.*, c. 5); Qui autem arbitrantur illud s, loco *his* adjunctum esse (priori scilicet parte per aphæresim abscissâ), ideoque apostrophi notam semper vel pingendam esse, vel saltem subintelligendam, omnino errant. Quamvis enim non negem quin apostrophi nota commode nonnunquam affigi possit, ut ipsius litteræ s usus distinctius, ubi opus est, percipiatur; ita tamen semper fieri debere, aut etiam ideo fieri quia vocem *his* innuat, omnino nego. Adjungitur enim et fœminarum nominibus propriis, et substantivis pluralibus, ubi vox *his* sine solœcismo locum habere non potest: atque etiam in possessivis *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*, *hers*, ubi vocem *his* innui nemo somniaret.

‡ See the proofs in Marsh's *Manual of the English Language*, English Edit., pp. 280, 293.

justify those who assumed that in the habitual 's' of the genitive were to be found the remains of 'his'—an error from which the books of scholars in the seventeenth, and in the early decades of the eighteenth, century are not a whit clearer than those of others. Spenser, Donne, Fuller, Jeremy Taylor, all fall into it; I cannot say confidently whether Milton does. Dryden more than once helps out his verse with an additional syllable gained by its aid. It has even forced its way into our Prayer Book itself, where in the "Prayer for all sorts and conditions of men," added by Bishop Sanderson at the last revision of the Liturgy in 1661, we are bidden to say, "and this we beg for Jesus Christ *his* sake."* I need hardly tell you that this 's' is in fact the one remnant of flexion surviving in the singular number of our English noun substantives; it is in all the Indo-Germanic languages the original sign of the genitive, or at any rate the earliest of which we can take cognizance; and just as in Latin 'lapis' makes 'lapidis'

* I cannot think that it would exceed the authority of our University Presses, if this were removed from the Prayer Books which they put forth, as certainly it is suppress by many of the clergy in the reading. Such a liberty they have already assumed with the Bible. In all earlier editions of the Authorized Version it stood at 1 Kin. xv. 24: "Nevertheless *Asa his* heart was perfect with the Lord;" it is "*Asa's* heart" now. In the same way "*Mordecai his* matters" (Esth. iii. 4) has been silently changed into "*Mordecai's* matters;" and in some modern editions, but not in all, "*Holofernes his* head" (Judith xiii. 9) into "*Holofernes'* head."

in the genitive, so 'king,' 'queen,' 'child,' make severally 'kings,' 'queens,' 'childs,' the comma, an apparent note of elision, being a mere modern expedient, "a late refinement," as Ash calls it,* to distinguish the genitive singular from the plural cases.†

Notice another example of this willingness to dispense with inflection, of this endeavour on the part of the speakers of a language to reduce its forms to the fewest possible, consistent with the accurate communication of thought. Of our adjectives in 'en,' formed on substantives, and expressing the material or substance of a thing, some have gone, others are going, out of use; while we content ourselves with the bare juxtaposition of the substantive itself, as sufficiently expressing our meaning. Thus instead of "*golden* pin" we say "*gold* pin;" instead of "*earthen* works" we say "*earth* works." 'Golden' and 'earthen,' it is true, still belong to our living speech, though mainly as part of our poetic diction, or of the solemn and thus stereotyped language of Scripture; but a whole company of such words have nearly or quite disappeared; some lately, some long ago. 'Steelen' and 'flowren' belong only to the earliest period of the language; 'rosen' also went early. Chaucer is my latest authority for it ("*rosen* chapelet"). 'Hairen' is in Wiclif and in

* In a good note on the matter, p. 6, in the *Comprehensive Grammar* prefixed to his *Dictionary*, London, 1775.

† See Grimm, *Deut. Gramm.*, vol. ii. pp. 609, 944.

Chaucer; 'stonen' in the former (John iii. 6).* 'Silvern' stood originally in Wiclif's Bible ("*silverne* housis to Diane," Acts xix. 24); but already in the second recension of this was exchanged for 'silver;' 'hornen,' still in provincial use, he also employs, and 'clayen' (Job iv. 19) no less. 'Tinnen' occurs in Sylvester's *Du Bartas;* where also we meet with "Jove's *milken* alley," as a name for the *Via Lactea,* in Bacon also not "the *Milky,*" but "the *Milken* Way." In the coarse polemics of the Reformation the phrase, "*breaden* god," provoked by the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, was of frequent employment, and occurs as late as in Oldham. "*Mothen* parchments" is in Fulke; "*twiggen* bottle" in Shakespeare; '*yewen,*' or, according to earlier spelling, "*ewghen* bow," in Spenser; "*cedarn* alley," and "*azurn* sheen" are both in Milton; "*boxen* leaves" in Dryden; "a *treen* cup" in Jeremy Taylor; "*eldern* popguns" in Sir Thomas Overbury; "a *glassen* breast," in Whitlock; "a *reeden* hat" in Coryat; 'yarnen' occurs in Turberville; 'furzen' in Holland; 'threaden' in Shakespeare; and 'bricken,' 'papern' appear in our provincial glossaries as still in use.

It is true that many of these adjectives still

* The existence of 'stony' = 'lapidosus,' 'steinig,' does not make 'stonen' = 'lapideus,' 'steinern,' superfluous any more than 'earthy' makes 'earthen.' That part of the field in which the good seed withered so quickly (Matt. xiii. 5) was 'stony.' The vessels which held the water that Christ turned into wine (John iii. 6) were 'stonen.'

hold their ground; but it is curious to note how the roots which sustain even these are being gradually cut away from beneath them. Thus 'brazen' might at first sight seem as strongly established in the language as ever; it is far from so being; its supports are being cut from beneath it. Even now it only lives in a tropical and secondary sense, as 'a *brazen* face;' or if in a literal, in poetic diction or in the consecrated language of Scripture, as 'the *brazen* serpent;' otherwise we say 'a *brass* farthing,' 'a *brass* candlestick.' It is the same with 'oaten,' 'oaken,' 'birchen,' 'beechen,' 'strawen,' and many more, whereof some are obsolescent, some obsolete, the language manifestly tending now, as it has tended for a long time past, to the getting quit of these, and to the satisfying of itself with an adjectival apposition of the substantive in their stead.

Let me illustrate by another example the way in which a language, as it travels onward, simplifies itself, approaches more and more to a grammatical and logical uniformity, seeks to do the same thing always in the same manner; where it has two or three ways of conducting a single operation, lets all of them go but one; and thus becomes, no doubt, easier to be mastered, more handy, more manageable; for its very riches were to many an embarrassment and a perplexity; but at the same time imposes limits and restraints on its own freedom of action, and is in danger of forfeiting elements of strength, variety and beauty, which it once possessed. I refer to the tendency of our

verbs to let go their strong præterites, and to substitute weak ones in their room; or, where they have two or three præterites, to retain only one of them, and that invariably the weak one. Though many of us no doubt are familiar with the terms 'strong' and 'weak' præterites, which in all our better grammars have put out of use the wholly misleading terms, 'irregular' and 'regular,' I may perhaps as well remind you of the exact meaning of the terms. A strong præterite is one formed by an internal vowel change; for instance the verb 'to *drive*' forms the præterite '*drove*' by an internal change of the vowel 'i' into 'o.' But why, it may be asked, called 'strong'? In respect of the vigour and indwelling energy in the word, enabling it to form its past tense from its own resources, and with no calling in of help from without. On the other hand 'lift' forms its præterite 'lift*ed*,' not by any internal change, but by the addition of 'ed;' 'grieve' in like manner has 'griev*ed*.' Here are weak tenses; as strength was ascribed to the other verbs, so weakness to these, which can only form their præterites by external aid and addition. You will see at once that these strong præterites, while they witness to a vital energy in the words which are able to put them forth, do also, as must be allowed by all, contribute much to the variety and charm of a language.*

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* J. Grimm (*Deutsche Gramm.* vol. i. p. 1040): Dass die starke form die ältere, kräftigere, innere; die schwache die

The point, however, which I am urging now is this,—that these are becoming fewer every day; multitudes of them having disappeared, while others are in the act of disappearing. Nor is the balance redressed and compensation found in any new creations of the kind. The power of forming strong præterites is long ago extinct; probably no verb which has come into the language since the Conquest has asserted this power, while a whole legion have let it go. For example, 'shape' has now a weak præterite, 'shaped,' it had once a strong one, 'shope;' 'bake' has now a weak præterite, 'baked,' it had once a strong one, 'boke;' the præterite of 'glide' is now 'glided,' it was once 'glode' or 'glid;' 'help' makes now 'helped,' it made once 'halp' and 'holp.' 'Creep' made 'crope,' still current in the north of England; 'weep' 'wope;' 'yell' 'yoll' (both in Chaucer); 'seethe' 'soth' or 'sod' (Gen. xxv. 29); 'sheer' in like manner once made 'shore;' as 'leap' made 'lope;' 'wash' 'wishe' (Chaucer); 'snow' 'snew;' 'sow' 'sew;' 'delve' 'dalf' and 'dolve;' 'sweat' 'swat;' 'yield' 'yold' (both in Spenser); 'mete' 'mat' (Wiclif); 'stretch' 'straught;' 'melt' 'molt;' 'wax' 'wex' and

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spätere, gehemmtere und mehr äusserliche sey, leuchtet ein. Elsewhere, speaking generally of inflections by internal vowel change, he characterizes them as a 'chief beauty' (hauptschönheit) of the Teutonic languages. Marsh (*Manual of the English Language*, p. 233, English ed.) protests, though, as it seems to me, on no sufficient grounds, against these terms 'strong' and 'weak,' as themselves fanciful and inappropriate.

'wox;' 'laugh' 'leugh;' with others more than can be enumerated here.*

Observe further that where verbs have not actually renounced their strong præterites, and contented themselves with weak in their room, yet, once possessing two, or, it might be three of these strong, they now retain only one. The others, on the *principle* of dismissing whatever can be dismissed, they have let go. Thus 'chide' had once 'chid' and 'chode,' but though 'chode' is in our Bible (Gen. xxxi. 36), it has not maintained itself in our speech; 'sling' had 'slung' and 'slang' (1 Sam. xvii. 49); only 'slung' remains; 'fling' had once 'flung' and 'flang;' 'strive' had 'strove' and 'strave;' 'stick' had 'stuck' and 'stack;' 'hang' had 'hung' and 'hing' (Golding); 'tread' had 'trod' and 'trad;' 'choose' had 'chose' and 'chase;' 'give' had 'gave' and 'gove;' 'lead' had 'led' 'lad' and 'lode;' 'write' had 'wrote' 'writ' and 'wrate.' In all these cases, and more might

* The entire ignorance as to the past historic evolution of the language, with which some have undertaken to write about it, is curious. Thus the author of *Observations upon the English Language*, without date, but published about 1730, treats all these strong præterites as of recent introduction, counting 'knew' to have lately expelled 'knowed,' 'rose' to have acted the same part toward 'rised,' and of course esteeming them as so many barbarous violations of the laws of the language; and concluding with the warning that "great care must be taken to prevent their increase."!!—p. 24. Cobbett does not fall into this absurdity, yet proposes in his *English Grammar*, that they should all be abolished as inconvenient.

easily be cited, only the præterites which I have named, the first remains in use.

Observe too that in every instance where a conflict is now going on between weak and strong forms, which shall continue, the battle is not to the strong; on the contrary the weak is carrying the day, is getting the better of its stronger competitor. Thus 'climbed' is gaining the upper hand of 'clomb,' 'swelled' of 'swoll,' 'hanged' of 'hung.' It is not too much to anticipate that a time will come, although it may be still far off, when all English verbs will form their præterites weakly; not without serious damage to the fulness and force which in this respect the language even now displays, and once far more eminently displayed.*

Take another proof of this tendency in our own language to drop its forms and renounce its own inherent powers; though here also the renunciation, threatening one day to be complete, is only partial at the present. I refer to the formation of our comparatives and superlatives; and I will ask you again to observe here that curious law of language, namely, that wherever there are two or more ways of attaining the same result, there is always a disposition to drop and dismiss all of these but one, so that the alternative or choice of ways once existing, shall not exist any more. If only it can attain a greater simplicity, it seems

* J. Grimm (*Deutsche Gramm.* vol. i. p. 839): "Die starke flexion stufenweise versinkt und ausstirbt, die schwache aber um sich greift." Cf. i. 994, 1040; ii. 5; iv. 509.

to grudge no self-impoverishment by which this result may be brought about. We have two ways of forming our comparatives and superlatives, one dwelling in the word itself, which we have inherited from our old Gothic stock, as 'bright,' 'bright*er*,' 'bright*est*,' the other supplementary to this, by prefixing the auxiliaries 'more' and 'most.' The first, organic we might call it, the indwelling power of the word to mark its own degrees, must needs be esteemed the more excellent way; which yet, already disallowed in almost all adjectives of more than two syllables in length, is daily becoming of narrower and more restrained application. Compare in this matter our present with our past. Wiclif for example forms such comparatives as 'grievouser,' 'gloriouser,' 'patienter,' 'profitabler,' such superlatives as 'grievousest,' 'famousest;' this last occurring also in Bacon. We meet in Tyndale, 'excellenter,' 'miserablest;' in Shakespeare, 'violentest;' in Gabriel Harvey, 'vendiblest,' 'substantialest,' 'insolentest;' in Rogers, 'insufficienter,' 'goldener;' in Beaumont and Fletcher, 'valiantest.' Milton uses 'virtuosest,' and in prose 'vitiosest,' 'elegantest,' 'artificialest,' 'servilest,' 'sheepishest,' 'resolutest,' 'sensualest;' Fuller has 'fertilest;' Baxter 'tediousest;' Butler 'preciousest,' 'intolerablest;' Burnet 'copiousest,' Gray 'impudentest.' Of these forms, and it would be easy to adduce almost any number, we should hardly employ any now. In participles and adverbs in 'ly,' these organic comparatives and superlatives hardly survive at all. We do

not say 'willinger' or 'lovinger,' and still less 'flourishingest,' or 'shiningest,' or 'surmountingest,' all which Gabriel Harvey, a foremost master of the English of his time, employs; 'plenteouslyer,' 'fulliest' (Wiclif), 'easiliest' (Fuller), 'plainliest' (Dryden), would be all inadmissible at present.

In the manifest tendency of English at the present moment to reduce the number of words in which this more vigorous scheme of expressing degrees is allowed, we must recognize an evidence that the energy which the language had in its youth is in some measure abating, and the stiffness of age overtaking it. Still it is with us here only as it is with all languages, in which at a certain time of their life auxiliary words, leaving the main word unaltered, are preferred to inflections of this last. Such preference makes itself ever more strongly felt; and, judging from analogy, I cannot doubt that a day, however distant now, will arrive, when the only way of forming comparatives and superlatives in the English language will be by prefixing 'more' and 'most;' or, if the other survive, it will be in poetry alone.

It will fare not otherwise, as I am bold to predict, with the flexional genitive, formed in 's' or 'es' (see p. 162). This too will finally disappear altogether from the language, or will survive only in poetry, and as much an archaic form there as the 'pictaï' of Virgil. A time will come when it will not any longer be free to say, as now, either, "*the king's sons*," or "*the sons of the king*," but when the

latter will be the only admissible form. Tokens of this are already evident. The region in which the alternative forms are equally good is daily narrowing. We should not now any more write, "when *man's son* shall come" (Wiclif), but "when *the Son of man* shall come," nor yet, "*the hypocrite's hope* shall perish" (Job viii. 13, Authorized Version), but, "*the hope of the hypocrite* shall perish;" not with Barrow, "No man can be ignorant *of human life's brevity and uncertainty*," but "No man can be ignorant *of the brevity and uncertainty of human life.*" The consummation which I anticipate may be centuries off, but will assuredly arrive.

Then too diminutives are fast disappearing from the language. If we desire to express smallness, we prefer to do it by an auxiliary word; thus a little fist, and not a 'fistock' (Golding), a little lad, and not a 'ladkin,' a little worm, rather than a 'wormling' (Sylvester). It is true that of diminutives very many still survive, in all our four terminations of such, as 'hillock,' 'streamlet,' 'lambkin,' 'gosling;' but those which have perished are many more. Where now is 'kingling' (Holland), 'whimling' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'godling,' 'loveling,' 'dwarfling,' 'sherperdling' (all in Sylvester), 'chasteling' (Becon), 'niceling' (Stubbs), 'fosterling' (Ben Jonson), and 'masterling'? Where now 'porelet' (=paupercula, Isai. x. 30, Vulg.), 'bundelet,' (both in Wiclif); 'cushionet' (Henry More), 'havenet,' or little 'haven,' 'pistolet,' 'bulkin' (Holland), and a

hundred more? Even of those which remain many are putting off, or have long since put off, their diminutive sense; a 'pocket' being no longer a *small* poke, nor a 'latchet' a *small* lace, nor a 'trumpet' a small *trump*, as once they were.

Once more—in the entire dropping among the higher classes of 'thou,' except in poetry or in addresses to the Deity, and as a necessary consequence, the dropping also of the second singular of the verb with its strongly marked flexion, as 'lovest,' 'lovedst,' we have another example of a force once existing in the language, which has been, or is being, allowed to expire. In the seventeenth century 'thou' in English, as at the present 'du' in German, 'tu' in French, was the sign of familiarity, whether that familiarity was of love, or of contempt and scorn.* It was not unfrequently the latter. Thus at Sir Walter Raleigh's trial (1603), Coke, when argument and evidence failed him, insulted the defendant by applying to him the term 'thou':—"All that Lord Cobham did was at *thy* instigation, *thou* viper! for I *thou* thee, *thou* traitor." And when Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night* is urging Sir Andrew Aguecheek to send a sufficiently provocative challenge to Viola, he suggests to him that he "taunt him with the licence of ink; if thou *thou'st* him some thrice, it shall not be amiss." To keep this in

* Thus Wallis (*Gramm. Ling. Anglic.*, 1654): Singulari numero siquis alium compellet, vel dedignantis illud esse solet, vel familiariter blandientis.

mind will throw much light on one peculiarity of the Quakers, and give a certain dignity to it, as once maintained, which at present it is very far from possessing. However needless and unwise their determination to 'thee' and 'thou' the whole world was, yet this had a significance. It was not, as now to us it seems, and, through the silent changes which language has undergone, as now it indeed is, a gratuitous departure from the ordinary usage of society. Right or wrong, it meant something, and had an ethical motive: being indeed a testimony upon their parts, however misplaced, that they would not have high or great or rich men's persons in admiration; nor give the observance to some which they withheld from others. It was a testimony too which cost them something; at present we can very little understand the amount of courage which this 'thou-ing' and 'thee-ing' of all men must have demanded on their parts, nor yet the amount of indignation and offence which it stirred up in them who were not aware of, or would not allow for, the scruples which obliged them to it.* It is, however, in its

* What the actual position of the compellation 'thou' was at that time, we may perhaps best learn from this passage in Fuller's *Church History, Dedication of Book* vii.: "In opposition whereunto [*i.e.* to the Quaker usage] we maintain that *thou* from superiors to inferiors is proper, as a sign of command; from equals to equals is passable, as a note of familiarity; but from inferiors to superiors, if proceeding from ignorance, hath a smack of clownishness; if from affectation, a tone of contempt."

other aspect that we must chiefly regret the dying out of the use of 'thou'—that is, as the pledge of peculiar intimacy and special affection, as between husband and wife, parents and children, and such other as might be knit together by bands of more than common affection.

I have preferred during this lecture to find my theme in changes which are now going forward in English, but I cannot finish it without drawing one illustration from its remoter periods, and bidding you to note a force not now waning and failing from it, but extinct long ago. I cannot well pass it by; being as it is by far the boldest step which in this direction of simplification the English language has at any time taken. I refer to the renouncing of the distribution of its nouns into masculine, feminine, and neuter, as in German, or even into masculine and feminine, as in French; and with this, and as a necessary consequence of this, the dropping of any flexional modification in the adjectives connected with them. Natural *sex* of course remains, being inherent in all language; but grammatical *gender*, with the exception of 'he,' 'she,' and 'it,' and perhaps one or two other fragmentary instances, the language has altogether foregone. An example will make clear the distinction between these. Thus it is not the word 'poetess' which is *feminine*, but the person indicated who is *female*. So too 'daughter,' 'queen,' are in English not *feminine* nouns, but nouns designating *female* persons. Take on the contrary 'filia' or 'regina,' 'fille' or 'reine,' there

you have *feminine* nouns as well as *female* persons. I need hardly say to you that we did not inherit this simplicity from others, but, like the Danes, in so far as they have done the like, have made it for ourselves. Whether we turn to the Latin, or, which is for us more important, to the old Gothic, we find gender; and in all daughter languages which have descended from the Latin, in most of those which have descended from the ancient Gothic stock, it is fully established to this day. The practical business-like character of the English mind asserted itself in the rejection of a distinction, which in a vast proportion of words, that is, in all which are the signs of *inanimate* objects, and as such incapable of sex, rested upon a fiction, and had no ground in the real nature of things. It is only by an act and effort of the imagination that sex, and thus gender, can be attributed to a table, a ship, or a tree; and there are aspects, this being one, in which the English is among the least imaginative of all languages, even while it has been employed in some of the mightiest works of imagination which the world has ever seen.*

What, it may be asked, is the meaning and explanation of all this? It is that at certain earlier periods of a nation's life its genius is synthetic, and at later becomes analytic. At earlier periods all is by synthesis; and men love to contemplate

* See on this subject of the dropping of grammatical gender, Pott, *Etymologische Forschungen*, part 2, pp. 404, *sqq.*

the thing, and the mode of the thing, together, as a single idea, bound up in one. But a time arrives when the intellectual obtains the upper hand of the imaginative, when the tendency of those that speak the language is to analyse, to distinguish between these two, and not only to distinguish but to divide, to have one word for the thing itself, and another for the quality of the thing; and this, as it would appear, is true not of some languages only, but of all.

LECTURE IV.

CHANGES IN THE MEANING OF ENGLISH WORDS.

I PROPOSE, according to the plan sketched out in my first lecture, to take for my subject in the present those changes which in the course of time have found place, or now are finding place, in the meaning of many among our English words; so that, whether we are aware of it or not, we employ them at this day in senses very different from those in which our forefathers employed them of old. You will observe that it is not *obsolete* words, words quite fallen out of present use, which I propose to consider; but such, rather, as are still on the lips of men, but with meanings more or less removed from those which once they possessed. My subject is far more practical, has far more to do with your actual life, than if I had taken obsolete words, and considered them. These last have an interest indeed, but it is an interest of an antiquarian character. They constituted a part of the intellectual money with which our ancestors carried on the business of their life; but now they are rather medals for the cabinets and collections of the curious than current money for the needs and pleasures of all. Their wings are clipped, so that they are "*winged* words" no more; the spark of thought or feeling,

kindling from mind to mind, no longer runs along them, as along the electric wires of the soul.

And then, besides this, there is little or no danger that any should be misled by them. A reader lights for the first time on one of these obsolete English words, as 'frampold,' or 'garboil,' or 'brangle;' he is at once conscious of his ignorance; he has recourse to a glossary, or if he guesses from the context at the word's signification, still his guess is as a guess to him, and no more. But words that have changed their meaning have often a deceivableness about them; a reader not once doubts but that he knows their intention, has no misgiving but that they possess for him the same force which they possessed for their writer, and conveyed to *his* contemporaries, when indeed it is quite otherwise. The old life has gone out of them and a new life entered in.

Thus, for example, a reader of our day lights upon such a passage as the following (it is from the *Preface* to Howell's *Lexicon*, 1660): "Though the root of the English language be *Dutch*, yet it may be said to have been inoculated afterwards on a French stock." He may know that the Dutch is a sister language or dialect to our own; but this that it is the mother or root of it will certainly perplex him, and he will hardly know what to make of the assertion; perhaps he ascribes it to an error in his author, who is thereby unduly lowered in his esteem. But presently in the course of his reading he meets with the following statement, this time in Fuller's *Holy War*,

being a history of the Crusades: "The French, *Dutch*, Italian, and English were the four elemental nations, whereof this army [of the Crusaders] was compounded." If the student has sufficient historical knowledge to know that in the time of the Crusades there were no Dutch in our use of the word, this statement would merely startle him; and probably before he had finished the chapter, having his attention once roused, he would perceive that Fuller with the writers of his time used 'Dutch' for German; even as it was constantly so used up to the end of the seventeenth century; and as the Americans use it to this present day; what we call now a Dutchman being then a Hollander. But a young student might very possibly want that amount of previous knowledge, which should cause him to receive this announcement with misgiving and surprise; and thus he might carry away altogether a wrong impression, and rise from a perusal of the book, persuaded that the Dutch, as we call them, played an important part in the Crusades, while the Germans took little or no part in them at all.

And as it is here with an historic fact, so still more often will it happen with the subtler changes which words have undergone. Out of this it will continually happen that they convey now much more blame and condemnation, or convey now much less, than formerly they did; or of a different kind; and a reader not aware of the altered value which they now possess, may be in continual danger of misreading his author, of mis-

understanding his intention, while he has no doubt whatever that he perfectly apprehends and takes it in. Thus when Shakespeare in 1 *Henry VI.* makes the gallant York address Joan of Arc as a 'miscreant,' how coarse a piece of invective this sounds; how unlike what the chivalrous soldier would have uttered; or what one might have supposed Shakespeare, even with his unworthy estimate of the holy warrior Maid, would have put into his mouth. But a 'miscreant' in Shakespeare's time had nothing of the meaning which now it has. It was simply, in agreement with its etymology, a misbeliever, one who did not believe rightly the articles of the Catholic Faith. And I need not remind you that this was the constant charge which the English brought against Joan,—namely, that she was a dealer in hidden magical arts, a witch, and as such had fallen from the faith. On this plea they burnt her, and it is this which York means when he calls her a 'miscreant,' and not what we should intend by the name.

In reading of poetry above all what beauties are often missed, what forces lost, through this assumption that the present of a word is always equivalent to its past. How often the poet is wronged in our estimation; that seeming to us now flat and pointless, which at once would lose this character, did we know how to read into some word the emphasis which it once had, but which now has departed from it. For example, Milton ascribes in *Comus* the "*tinsel-slippered* feet" to

Thetis, the goddess of the sea. How comparatively poor an epithet this 'tinsel-slippered' sounds for those who know of 'tinsel' only in its modern acceptation of mean and tawdry finery, affecting a splendor which it does not really possess. But learn its earlier use by learning its derivation, bring it back to the French 'étincelle,' and the Latin 'scintillula;' see in it, as Milton and the writers of his time saw, 'the sparkling,' and how exquisitely beautiful a title does this become applied to a goddess of the sea; how vividly does it call up before our mind's eye the quick glitter and sparkle of the waves under the light of sun or moon.* It is Homer's 'silver-footed' (ἀργυρόπεζα), not servilely transferred, but reproduced and made his own by the English poet, dealing as one great poet will do with another; who will not disdain to borrow, but to what he borrows will add often a further grace of his own.

Or, again, do we keep in mind, or are we even aware, that whenever the word 'influence' occurs in our English poetry, down to comparatively a modern date, there is always more or less remote allusion to invisible illapses of power, skyey, planetary effects, supposed to be exercised by the heavenly luminaries upon the lives of men? How many a passage starts into new life and beauty

* So in Herrick's *Electra*:

"More white than are the whitest creams,
Or moonlight *tinselling* the streams."

and fulness of allusion, when this is present with us; even Milton's

> "store of ladies, whose bright eyes
> Rain *influence*,"

as spectators of the tournament, gain something, when we regard them—and using this language, he intended we should—as the luminaries of this lower sphere, shedding by their propitious presence strength and valour into the hearts of their knights.

The word even in its present acceptation may yield, as here, a convenient and even a correct sense; we may fall into no positive misapprehension about it; and still, through ignorance of its past history and of the force which it once possessed, we may miss a great part of its significance. We are not *beside* the meaning of our author, but we are *short* of it. Thus in Beaumont and Fletcher's *King and no King*, (Act iii. Sc. 2,) a cowardly braggart of a soldier describes the treatment he experienced, when like Parolles he was at length found out, and stripped of his lion's skin:—"They hung me up by the heels and beat me with hazel sticks, . . . that the whole kingdom took notice of me for a *baffled* whipped fellow." The word to which I wish here to call your attention is 'baffled.' Were you reading this passage, there would probably be nothing here to cause you to pause; you would attach to 'baffled' a sense which sorts very well with the context—"hung up by the heels and beaten, all his schemes of being

thought much of were *baffled* and defeated." But 'baffled' implies far more than this; it contains allusion to a custom in the days of chivalry, according to which a perjured or recreant knight was either in person, or more commonly in effigy, hung up by the heels, his scutcheon blotted, his spear broken, and he himself or his effigy made the mark and subject of all kinds of indignities; such a one being said to be 'baffled.'* Twice in Spenser recreant knights are so dealt with. I can only quote a portion of the shorter passage, in which this infamous punishment is described:

> "And after all, for greater infamy
> He by the heels him hung upon a tree,
> And *baffled* so, that all which passéd by
> The picture of his punishment might see."†

Probably when Beaumont and Fletcher wrote, men were not so remote from the days of chivalry, or at any rate from the literature of chivalry, but that this custom was still fresh in their minds. How much more to them than to us, so long as we are ignorant of the same, would those words I just quoted have conveyed?

There are several places in the Authorized Version of Scripture, where those who are not aware of the changes which have taken place during the last two hundred and fifty years in our language, can hardly fail of being to a certain extent misled

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* See Holinshed's *Chronicles*, vol. iii. pp. 827, 1218: Ann. 1513, 1570.

† *Fairy Queen*, vi. 7, 27; cf. v. 3, 37.

as to the intention of our Translators; or, if they are better acquainted with Greek than with early English, will be tempted to ascribe to them, though unjustly, an inexact rendering of the original. Thus the altered meaning of a word involves a serious misunderstanding in that well known statement of St. James, "Pure *religion* and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." "There," exclaims one who wishes to set up St. James against St. Paul, that so he may escape the necessity of obeying either, "listen to what St. James says; there is nothing mystical in what he requires; instead of harping on faith as a condition necessary to salvation, he makes all religion to consist in practical deeds of kindness from one to another." But let us pause for a moment. Did 'religion,' when our translation was made, mean godliness? did it mean the *sum total* of our duties towards God? for, of course, no one would deny that deeds of charity are a necessary part of our Christian duty, an evidence of the faith which is in us. There is abundant evidence to show that 'religion' did not mean this; that, like the Greek θρησκεία, for which it here stands, like the Latin 'religio,' it meant the outward forms and embodiments in which the inward principle of piety arrayed itself, the *external service* of God: and St. James is urging upon those to whom he is writing something of this kind: "Instead of the ceremonial services of the Jews, which consisted in divers washings and in other elements of

this world, let our service, our *θρησκεία*, take a nobler shape, let it consist in deeds of pity and of love"—and it was this which our Translators intended, when they used 'religion' here and 'religious' in the verse preceding. How little 'religion' once meant godliness, how predominantly it was used for the *outward* service of God, is plain from many passages in our *Homilies*, and from other contemporary literature.

Again, there are words in our Liturgy which I have no doubt are commonly misunderstood. The mistake involves no serious error; yet still in our own language, and in words which we have constantly in our mouths, and at most solemn times, it is certainly better to be right than wrong. In the Litany we pray God that it would please Him "to give and preserve to our use the *kindly* fruits of the earth." What meaning do we attach to this epithet, "the *kindly* fruits of the earth"? Probably we understand by it those fruits in which the *kindness* of God or of nature towards us finds its expression. This is no unworthy explanation, but still it is not the right one. The "*kindly* fruits" are the "*natural* fruits," those which the earth according to its *kind* should naturally bring forth, which it is appointed to produce. To show you how little 'kindly' meant once benignant, as it means now, I will instance an employment of it from Sir Thomas More's *Life of Richard the Third*. He tells us that Richard calculated by murdering his two nephews in the Tower to make himself accounted "a *kindly*

king"—not certainly a 'kindly' one in our present usage of the word; but, having put them out of the way, that he should then be lineal heir of the Crown, and should thus be reckoned as king *by kind* or natural descent; and such was of old the constant use of the word.

A phrase in one of our occasional Services, "with my body I thee *worship*," has sometimes offended those who are unacquainted with the early uses of English words, and thus with the intention of the actual framers of that Service. Clearly in our modern sense of 'worship,' this language would be unjustifiable. But 'worship' or 'worthship' meant 'honour' in our early English, and 'to worship' to honour, this meaning of 'worship' still very harmlessly surviving in the title of "your worship," addressed to the magistrate on the bench. So little was it restrained of old to the honour which man is bound to pay to God, that it was employed by Wiclif to express the honour which God will render to his faithful servants and friends. Thus our Lord's declaration, "If any man serve Me, him will my Father *honour*," in Wiclif's translation reads thus, "If any man serve Me, my Father shall *worship* him." I do not say that there is not sufficient reason to change the words, "with my body I thee *worship*," if only there were any means of changing anything which is now antiquated and out of date in our services or arrangements. I think it would be very well if they were changed, liable as they are to misunderstanding and misconstruction now; but still

they did not mean at the first, and therefore do not now really mean, any more than, "with my body I thee *honour*," and so you may reply to any fault-finder here.

Take another example of a very easy misapprehension, although not now from Scripture or the Prayer Book. Fuller, our Church historian, having occasion to speak of some famous divine that was lately dead, exclaims, "Oh the *painfulness* of his preaching!" If we did not know the former uses of 'painfulness,' we might take this for an exclamation wrung out at the recollection of the tediousness which he inflicted on his hearers. Far from it; the words are a record not of the *pain* which he caused to others, but of the *pains* which he bestowed himself: and I am persuaded, if we had more 'painful' preachers in the old sense of the word, that is, who *took* pains themselves, we should have fewer 'painful' ones in the modern sense, who *cause* pain to their hearers. So too Bishop Grosthead is recorded as "the *painful* writer of two hundred books"—not meaning hereby that these books were painful in the reading, but that he was laborious and painful in their composing.

Here is another easy misapprehension. Swift wrote a pamphlet, or, as he called it, a *Letter to the Lord Treasurer*, with this title, "A proposal for correcting, improving, and *ascertaining* the English Tongue." Who that brought a knowledge of present English, and no more, to this passage, would doubt that "*ascertaining* the English Tongue" meant arriving at a certain knowledge of

what it was? Swift, however, means something quite different from this. "*To ascertain* the English tongue" is not with him to arrive at a subjective certainty in our own minds of what that tongue is, but to give an objective certainty to that tongue itself, so that henceforth it shall not alter nor change. For even Swift himself, with all his masculine sense, entertained a dream of this kind, as is more fully declared in the work itself.*

In other places unacquaintance with the changes in a word's usage will not so much mislead, as leave you nearly or altogether at a loss in respect of the intention of an author whom you may be reading. It is evident that he has a meaning, but what it is you are unable to divine, even though all the words he employs are words in familiar employment to the present day. For example, the poet Waller is congratulating Charles the Second on his return from exile, and is describing the way in which all men, even those formerly most hostile to him, were now seeking his favour, and he writes:

> "Offenders now, the chiefest, do begin
> To strive for grace, and expiate their sin:
> All winds blow fair that did the world embroil,
> *Your vipers treacle yield*, and scorpions oil."

Many a reader before now has felt, as I cannot doubt, a moment's perplexity at the now courtly poet's assertion that "*vipers treacle yield*"—who

* See Sir W. Scott's edition of Swift's *Works*, vol. ix. p. 139.

yet has been too indolent, or who has not had the opportunity, to search out what his meaning might be. There is in fact allusion here to a curious piece of legendary lore. 'Treacle,' or 'triacle,' as Chaucer wrote it, was originally a Greek word, and wrapped up in itself the once popular belief (an anticipation, by the way, of homœopathy), that a confection of the viper's flesh was the most potent antidote against the viper's bite.* Waller goes back to this the word's old meaning, familiar enough in his time, for Milton speaks of "the sovran *treacle* of sound doctrine,"† while "Venice treacle," or "viper wine," as it sometimes was called, was a common name for a supposed antidote against all poisons; and he would imply that regicides themselves began to be loyal, vipers not now yielding hurt any more, but rather healing for the old hurts which they themselves had inflicted. To trace the word down to its present use, it may

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* Θηριακή, from θηρίον, a designation given to the viper, see Acts xxviii. 4. 'Theriac' is only the more rigid form of the same word, the scholarly, as distinguished from the popular, adoption of it. Augustine (*Con. duas Epp. Pelag.* iii. 7): Sicut fieri consuevit antidotum etiam de serpentibus contra venena serpentum.

† And Chaucer, more solemnly still:

"Christ, which that is to every harm *triacle*."

The *antidotal* character of treacle comes out yet more in these lines of Lydgate:

"There is no *venom* so parlious in sharpnes,
As whan it hath of *treacle* a likenes."

be observed that, designating first this antidote, it then came to designate any antidote, then any medicinal confection or sweet syrup; and lastly that particular syrup, namely, the sweet syrup of molasses, to which alone it is now restricted.

I will draw on the writings of Fuller for one more example. In his *Holy War*, having enumerated the rabble rout of fugitive debtors, runaway slaves, thieves, adulterers, murderers, of men laden for one cause or another with heaviest censures of the Church, who swelled the ranks, and helped to make up the army, of the Crusaders, he exclaims, "A lamentable case, that the devil's *black guard* should be God's soldiers!" What does he mean, we may ask, by "the devil's *black guard*"? Nor is this a solitary mention of the "black guard." On the contrary, the phrase is of very frequent recurrence in the early dramatists and others down to the time of Dryden, who gives as one of his stage directions in *Don Sebastian*, "Enter the captain of the rabble, with the *Black guard*." What is this 'black guard'? Has it any connexion with a word of our homeliest vernacular? We feel that probably it has so; yet at first sight the connexion is not very apparent, nor indeed the exact force of the phrase. Let me trace its history. In old times, the palaces of our kings and seats of our nobles were not so well and completely furnished as at the present day: and thus it was customary, when a royal progress was made, or when the great nobility exchanged one residence for another, that at such

a removal all kitchen utensils, pots and pans, and even coals, should be also carried with them where they went. Those who accompanied and escorted these, the lowest, meanest, and dirtiest of the retainers, were called 'the black guard;'* then any troop or company of ragamuffins; and lastly, when the origin of the word was lost sight of, and it was forgotten that it properly implied a company, a rabble rout, and not a single person, one would compliment another, not as belonging to, but as himself being, the 'blackguard.'

The examples which I have adduced are, I am persuaded, sufficient to prove that it is not a useless and unprofitable study, nor yet one altogether without entertainment, to which I invite you; that on the contrary any one who desires to read with accuracy, and thus with advantage and pleasure, our earlier classics, who would avoid continual misapprehension in their perusal, and would not often fall short of, and often go astray from, their meaning, must needs bestow some attention on the altered significance of English words. And if this is so, we could not more usefully employ what remains of this present lecture than in seeking to indicate those changes which words most frequently undergo; and to trace as far as we can the causes, mental and moral, at work in the minds of men to bring these

* "A slave that within these twenty years rode with the *black guard* in the Duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping pans." (Webster's *White Devil.*)

changes about, with the good and evil out of which they have sprung, and to which they bear witness.

For indeed these changes to which words in the progress of time are submitted are not changes at random, but for the most part are obedient to certain laws, are capable of being distributed into certain classes, being the outward transcripts and witnesses of mental and moral processes inwardly going forward in those who bring them about. Many, it is true, will escape any classification of ours, the changes which have taken place in their meaning being, or at least seeming to us, the result of mere caprice; and not explicable by any principle which we can appeal to as habitually at work in the mind. But, admitting all this, a majority will still remain which are reducible to some law or other, and with these we will occupy ourselves now.

And first, the meaning of a word oftentimes is gradually narrowed. It was once as a generic name, embracing many as yet unnamed species within itself, which all went by its common designation. By and bye it is found convenient that each of these should have its own more special sign allotted to it.* It is here just as in some newly enclosed country, where a single household

* Génin (*Lexique de la Langue de Molière*, p. 367) says well: "En augmentant le nombre des mots, il a fallu restreindre leur signification, et faire aux nouveaux un apanage aux dépens des anciens."

will at first loosely occupy a whole district; while, as cultivation proceeds, this district is gradually parcelled out among a dozen or twenty, and under more accurate culture employs and sustains them all. Thus, for example, all food was once called 'meat;' it is so in our Bible, and 'horse-meat' for fodder is still no unusual phrase; yet 'meat' is now a name given only to flesh. Any little book or writing was a 'libel' once; now only such a one as is scurrilous and injurious. Any leader was a 'duke' (dux); thus "*duke* Hannibal" (Sir Thomas Elyot), "*duke* Brennus" (Holland), "*duke* Theseus" (Shakespeare), "*duke* Amalek," with other 'dukes' (Gen. xxxvi.). Any journey, by land as much as by sea, was a 'voyage.' 'Fairy' was not a name restricted, as now, to the *Gothic* mythology; thus "the *fairy* Egeria" (Sir J. Harrington). A 'corpse' might be quite as well living as dead. 'Weeds' were whatever covered the earth or the person; while now as respects the earth, those only are 'weeds' which are noxious, or at least self-sown; as regards the person, we speak of no other 'weeds' but the widow's. In each of these cases, the same contraction of meaning, the separating off and assigning to other words of large portions of this, has found place. 'To starve' (the German 'sterben,' and generally spelt 'sterve' up to the middle of the seventeenth century), meant once to die any manner of death; thus Chaucer says, Christ "*sterved* upon the cross for our redemption;" it now is restricted to the dying by cold or by hun-

ger. Words not a few were once applied to both sexes alike, which are now restricted to the female. It is so even with 'girl,' which was once a young person of either sex;* while other words in this list, such for instance as 'hoyden' (Milton, prose), 'shrew' (Chaucer), 'coquet' (Phillips, *New World of Words*), 'witch' (Wiclif), 'termagant' (Bale), 'scold,' 'jade,' 'slut' (Gower), must be regarded in their present exclusive appropriation to the female sex as evidences of men's rudeness, and not of women's deserts.

The necessities of an advancing civilization demand a greater precision and accuracy in the use of words having to do with weight, measure, number, size. Almost all such words as 'acre,' 'furlong,' 'yard,' 'gallon,' 'peck,' were once of a vague and unsettled use, and only at a later day, and in obedience to the requirements of commerce and social life, exact measures and designations. Thus every field was once an 'acre;' and this remains so still with the German 'acker,' and in our "God's acre," as a name for a churchyard; it was not till about the reign of Edward the First that 'acre' was commonly restricted to a determined measure and portion of land. Here and

* And no less so in French with 'dame,' by which form not 'domina' only, but 'dominus,' was represented. Thus in early French poetry, "*Dame* Dieu" for "*Dominus* Deus" continually occurs. We have here the key to the French exclamation, or oath, as we now perceive it to be, 'Dame!' of which the dictionaries give no account. See Génin's *Variations du Langage Français*, p. 347.

there even now a glebeland will be called "the acre;" and this, even while it contains not one but many of our measured acres. A 'furlong' was a 'furrowlong,' or length of a furrow.* Any pole was a 'yard,' and this vaguer use survives in 'sail*yard*,' 'hal*yard*,' and in other sea-terms. Every pitcher was a 'galon' (Mark xiv. 13, Wiclif), while a 'peck' was no more than a 'poke' or bag. And the same has no doubt taken place in all other languages. I will only remind you how the Greek 'drachm' was at first a handful (δραχμή='manipulus,' from δράσσω, to grasp); its later word for 'ten thousand' (μύριοι) implied in Homer's time any great multitude; and with the accent on a different syllable always retained this meaning.

Opposite to this is a counter-process by which words of narrower intention gradually enlarge the domain of their meaning, becoming capable of much wider application than any which once they admitted. Instances in this kind are fewer than in that which we have just been considering. The main stream and course of human thoughts and human discourse tends the other way, to discerning, distinguishing, dividing; and then to the permanent fixing of the distinctions gained, by the aid of designations which shall keep apart for ever in word that which has been once severed and sun-

* "A *furlong*, quasi *furrowlong*, being so much as a team in England plougheth going forward, before they return back again. (Fuller, *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, p. 42.)

dered in thought. Nor is it hard to perceive why this process should be the more frequent. Men are first struck with the likenesses between those things which are presented to them, with their points of resemblance; on the strength of which they bracket them under a common term. Further acquaintance reveals their points of unlikeness, the real dissimilarities which lurk under superficial resemblances, the need therefore of a different notation for objects which are essentially different. It is comparatively much rarer to discover real likeness under what at first appeared as unlikeness; and usually when a word moves forward, and from a specialty indicates now a generality, it is not in obedience to any such discovery of the true inner likeness of things,—the steps of successful generalizations being marked and secured in other ways. But this widening of a word's meaning is too often a result of those elements of disorganization and decay which are at work in a language. Men forget a word's history and etymology; its distinctive features are obliterated for them, with all which attached it to some thought or fact which by right was its own. Appropriated and restricted once to some striking specialty which it vigorously set out, it can now be used in a wider, vaguer, more unsettled way. It can be employed twenty times for once when it would have been possible formerly to employ it. Yet this is not gain, but pure loss. It has lost its place in the disciplined *army* of words, and become one of a loose and disorderly *mob*.

Let me instance the word 'preposterous.' It is now no longer of any practical service at all in the language, being merely an ungraceful and slipshod synonym for absurd. But restore and confine it to its old use; let it designate that one peculiar branch of absurdity which it designated once, namely the reversing of the true order of things, the putting of the last first, and, by consequence, of the first last, and of what excellent service the word would be capable. Thus it is 'preposterous,' in the most accurate use of the word, to put the cart before the horse, to expect wages before the work is done, to hang a man first and try him afterwards; and in this strict and accurate sense the word was always used by our elder writers.

In like manner 'to prevaricate' was never employed by good writers of the seventeenth century without nearer or more remote allusion to the uses of the word in the Roman law courts, where a 'prævaricator' (properly a straddler with distorted legs) did not mean generally and loosely, as now with us, one who shuffles, quibbles, and evades; but one who plays false in a particular manner; who, undertaking, or being by his office bound, to prosecute a charge, is in secret collusion with the opposite party; and, betraying the cause which he affects to support, so manages the accusation as to obtain not the condemnation, but the acquittal, of the accused; a "feint pleader," as, I think, in our old law language he would have been termed. How much force would the keeping of this in mind add to many passages in our elder divines.

Or take 'equivocal,' 'equivocate,' 'equivocation.' These words, which belonged at first to logic, have slipped down into common use, and in so doing have lost all the precision of their first employment. 'Equivocation' is now almost any such dealing in ambiguous words with the intention of deceiving, as falls short of an actual lie; but according to its etymology and in its primary use 'equivocation,' this fruitful mother of so much error, is the calling by the same name, of things essentially diverse, hiding intentionally or otherwise a real difference under a verbal resemblance.* Nor let it be urged in defence of its present looser use, that only so could it have served the needs of our ordinary conversation; on the contrary, had it retained its first use, how serviceable an implement of thought would it have been in detecting our own fallacies, or those of others; all which it can now be no longer.

What now is 'idea' for us? How infinite the fall of this word since the time when Milton sang of the Creator contemplating his newly created world,

> "how it showed,
> Answering his great *idea*,"

to its present use when this person "has an *idea* that the train has started," and the other "had no *idea* that the dinner would be so bad." But this word 'idea' is perhaps the worst case in the

* Thus Barrow: "Which [courage and constancy] he that wanteth is no other than *equivocally* a gentleman, as an image or a carcass is a man."

English language. Matters have not mended here since the times of Dr. Johnson; of whom Boswell tells us: "He was particularly indignant against the almost universal use of the word *idea* in the sense of *notion* or *opinion*, when it is clear that *idea* can only signify something of which an image can be formed in the mind." There is perhaps no word in the whole compass of English, so seldom used with any tolerable correctness; in none is the distance so immense between the frequent sublimity of the word in its proper use, and the triviality of it in its slovenly and its popular.

This tendency in words to lose the sharp, rigidly defined outline of meaning which they once possessed, to become of wide, vague, loose application instead of fixed, definite, and precise, to mean almost anything, and so really to mean nothing, is among the most fatally effectual which are at work for the final ruin of a language, and, I do not fear to add, for the demoralization of those that speak it. It is one against which we shall all do well to watch; for there is none of us who cannot do something in keeping words close to their own proper meaning, and in resisting their encroachment on the domain of others.

The causes which bring this mischief about are not hard to trace. We all know that when a piece of our silver money has long fulfilled its part, as "pale and common drudge 'tween man and man," whatever it had at first of sharper outline and livelier impress is in the end wholly obliterated

from it. So it is with words, above all with words of science and theology. These getting into general use, and passing often from mouth to mouth, lose the "image and superscription" which they had, before they descended from the school to the market-place, from the pulpit to the street. Being now caught up by those who understand imperfectly and thus incorrectly their true value, who will not be at the pains of understanding that, or who are incapable of doing so, they are obliged to accommodate themselves to the lower sphere in which they circulate, by laying aside much of the precision and accuracy and depth which once they had; they become weaker, shallower, more indefinite; till in the end, as exponents of thought and feeling, they cease to be of any service at all.

Sometimes a word does not merely narrow or extend its meaning, but altogether changes it; and this it does in more ways than one. Thus a secondary figurative sense will quite put out of use and extinguish the literal, until in the entire predominance of that it is altogether forgotten that it ever possessed any other. I may instance 'bombast' as a word about which this forgetfulness is nearly complete. What 'bombast' now means is familiar to us all, namely inflated words, "full of sound and fury," but "signifying nothing." This, at present its sole meaning, was once only the secondary and superinduced; 'bombast' being properly the cotton plant, and then the cotton

wadding with which garments were stuffed out and lined. You remember perhaps how Prince Hal addresses Falstaff, "How now, my sweet creature of *bombast*;" using the word in its literal sense; and another early poet has this line:

"Thy body's bolstered out with *bombast* and with bags."

'Bombast' was then transferred in a vigorous image to the big words without strength or solidity wherewith the discourses of some were stuffed out, and has now quite foregone any other meaning. So too 'to garble' was once "to cleanse from dross and dirt, as grocers do their spices, to pick or cull out."* It is never used now in this its primary sense, and has indeed undergone this further change, that while once 'to garble' was to sift for the purpose of selecting the best, it is now to sift with a view of picking out the worst.† 'Polite' is another word which in the figurative sense has quite extinguished the literal. We still speak of 'polished' surfaces; but not any more, with Cudworth, of "*polite* bodies, as looking glasses." Neither do we now 'exonerate' a ship (Burton); nor 'stigmatize,' at least otherwise than figuratively, a 'malefactor' (the same); nor 'corroborate' our health (Sir Thomas Elyot).

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* Phillips, *New World of Words*, 1706.

† "But his [Gideon's] army must be *garbled*, as too great for God to give victory thereby; all the fearful return home by proclamation." (Fuller, *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, b. ii. c. 8.)

Again, a word will travel on by slow and regularly progressive courses of change, itself a faithful index of changes going on in society and in the minds of men, till at length everything is changed about it. The process of this it is often very curious to observe; capable as not seldom it is of being watched step by step in its advances to the final consummation. There may be said to be three leading phases which the word successively presents, three steps in its history. At first it grows naturally out of its own root, is filled with its own natural meaning. Presently the word allows another meaning, one superinduced on the former, and foreign to its etymology, to share with the other in the possession of it, on the ground that where the former exists, the latter commonly co-exists with it. At the third step, the newly introduced meaning, not satisfied with its moiety, with dividing the possession of the word, has thrust out the original and rightful possessor altogether, and remains in sole and exclusive possession. The three successive stages may be represented by *a*, *ab*, *b*; in which series *b*, which was wanting altogether at the first stage, and was only admitted as secondary at the second, does at the third become primary and indeed alone.

We are not to suppose that in actual fact the transitions from one signification to another are so strongly and distinctly marked, as I have found it convenient to mark them here. Indeed it is hard to imagine anything more gradual, more subtle and

imperceptible, than the process of change. The manner in which the new meaning first insinuates itself into the old, and then drives out the old, can only be compared to the process of petrifaction, as rightly understood—the water not gradually turning what is put into it to stone, as we generally take the operation to be; but successively displacing each several particle of that which is brought within its power, and depositing a stony particle in its stead, till, in the end, while all appears to continue the same, all has in fact been thoroughly changed. It is precisely thus, by such slow, gradual, and subtle advances that the new meaning filters through and pervades the word, little by little displacing entirely that which it before possessed.

No word would illustrate this process better than that old example, familiar probably to us all, of 'villain.' The 'villain' is, first, the serf or peasant, 'villanus,' because attached to the 'villa' or farm. He is, secondly, the peasant who, it is further taken for granted, will be churlish, selfish, dishonest, and generally of evil moral conditions, these having come to be assumed as always belonging to him, and to be permanently associated with his name, by those higher classes of society who in the main commanded the springs of language. At the third step, nothing of the meaning which the etymology suggests, nothing of 'villa,' survives any longer; the peasant is wholly dismissed, and the evil moral conditions of him who is called by this name alone remain; so that

the name would now in this its final stage be applied as freely to peer, if he deserved it, as to peasant. 'Boor' has had exactly the same history; being first the cultivator of the soil; then secondly, the cultivator of the soil who, it is assumed, will be coarse, rude, and unmannerly; and then thirdly, any one who is coarse, rude, and unmannerly. So too 'pagan;' which is first villager, then heathen villager, and lastly heathen. You may trace the same progress in 'churl,' 'clown,' 'antic,' and in numerous other words. The intrusive meaning might be likened in all these cases to the egg which the cuckoo lays in the sparrow's nest; the young cuckoo first sharing the nest with its rightful occupants, but not resting till it has dislodged and ousted them altogether.

I will illustrate by the aid of one word more this part of my subject. I called your attention in my last lecture to the true character of several words and forms in use among our country people, and claimed for them to be in many instances genuine English, although English now more or less antiquated and overlived. 'Gossip' is a word in point. I have myself heard this name given by our Hampshire peasantry to the sponsors in baptism, the godfathers and godmothers. I do not say that it is a usual word; but it is occasionally employed, and well understood. This is a perfectly correct employment of 'gossip,' in fact its proper and original one, and involves moreover a very curious record of past beliefs. 'Gossip,' or 'gossib,' as Chaucer spelt it, is a compound

word, made up of the name of 'God,' and of an old Anglo-Saxon word, 'sib,' still alive in Scotland, as all readers of Walter Scott will remember, and in some parts of England, and which means, akin; they were said to be 'sib,' who are related to one another. But why, you may ask, was the name given to sponsors? Out of this reason;—in the middle ages it was the prevailing belief (and the Romish Church still affirms it), that those who stood as sponsors to the same child, besides contracting spiritual obligations on behalf of that child, also contracted spiritual affinity one with another; they became *sib*, or akin, in *God;* and thus 'gossips;' hence 'gossipred,' an old word, exactly analogous to 'kindred.' Out of this faith the Roman Catholic Church will not allow (unless indeed by dispensations procured for money), those who have stood as sponsors to the same child, afterwards to contract marriage with one another, affirming them too nearly related for this to be lawful.

Take 'gossip' however in its ordinary present use, as one addicted to idle tittle-tattle, and it seems to bear no relation whatever to its etymology and first meaning. The same three steps, however, which we have traced before will bring us to its present use. 'Gossips' are, first, the sponsors, brought by the act of a common sponsorship into affinity and near familiarity with one another; secondly, these sponsors, who being thus brought together, allow themselves one with the other in familiar, and then in trivial and idle, talk; thirdly, any who allow themselves in this trivial and idle talk,—

called in French 'commérage,' from the fact that 'commére' has run through exactly the same stages as its English equivalent.

It is plain that words which designate not things and persons only, but these as they are contemplated more or less in an ethical light, words which tinge with a moral sentiment what they designate, are peculiarly exposed to change; are constantly liable to take a new colouring, or to lose an old. The gauge and measure of praise or blame, honour or dishonour, admiration or abhorrence, which they convey, is so purely a mental and subjective one, that it is most difficult to take accurate note of its rise or of its fall, while yet there are causes continually at work leading it to the one or the other. There are words not a few, but ethical words above all, which have so imperceptibly drifted away from their former moorings, that although their position is now very different from that which they once occupied, scarcely one in a hundred of casual readers, whose attention has not been specially called to the subject, will have observed that they have moved at all. Here too we observe some words conveying less of praise or blame than once, and some more; while some have wholly shifted from the one to the other. Some were at one time words of slight, almost of offence, which have altogether ceased to be so now. Still these are rare by comparison with those which once were harmless, but now are harmless no more; which once, it may be, were terms of honour, but which now imply a slight or

even a scorn. It is only too easy to perceive why these should exceed those in number.

Let us take an example or two. If any were to speak now of royal children as "royal *imps*," it would sound, and with our present use of the word would be, impertinent and unbecoming enough; and yet 'imp' was once a name of dignity and honour, and not of slight or of undue familiarity. Thus Spenser addresses the Muses in this language,

> "Ye sacred *imps* that on Parnasso dwell;"

and 'imp' was especially used of the scions of royal or illustrious houses. More than one epitaph, still existing, of our ancient nobility might be quoted, beginning in such language as this, "Here lies that noble *imp*." Or what should we say of a poet who commenced a solemn poem in this fashion,

> "Oh Israel, oh household of the Lord,
> Oh Abraham's *brats*, oh brood of blessed seed"?

Could we conclude anything else but that he meant, by using low words on lofty occasions, to turn sacred things into ridicule? Yet this was very far from the intention of Gascoigne, the poet whose lines I have just quoted. "Abraham's *brats*" was used by him in perfect good faith, and without the slightest feeling that anything ludicrous or contemptuous adhered to the word 'brat,' as indeed in his time there did not, any more than adheres to 'brood,' which is another form of the same word now.

Call a person 'pragmatical,' and you now imply not merely that he is busy, but *over*-busy, officious, self-important, and pompous to boot. But it once meant nothing of the kind, and 'pragmatical' (like πραγματικός), was one engaged in affairs, being an honourable title, given to a man simply and industriously accomplishing the business which properly concerned him.* So too to say that a person 'meddles' or is a 'meddler' implies now that he interferes unduly in other men's matters, without a call mixing himself up with them. This was not insinuated in the earlier uses of the word. On the contrary three of our earlier translations of the Bible have, "*Meddle* with your own business" (1 Thess. iv. 11); and Barrow in one of his sermons draws at some length the distinction between 'meddling' and "being *meddlesome*," and only condemns the latter.

Or take again the words, 'to prose' or a 'proser.' It cannot indeed be affirmed that they convey any *moral* condemnation, yet they certainly convey no compliment now; and are almost among the last which any one would desire should with justice be applied either to his talking or his writing. For 'to prose,' as we all now know too well, is to talk or write heavily and

* "We cannot always be contemplative, or *pragmatical* abroad: but have need of some delightful intermissions, wherein the enlarged soul may leave off awhile her severe schooling." (Milton, *Tetrachordon.*)

tediously, without spirit and without animation; but once it was simply the antithesis of to versify, and a 'proser' the antithesis of a versifier or a poet. It will follow that the most rapid and liveliest writer who ever wrote, if he did not write in verse would have 'prosed' and been a 'proser,' in the language of our ancestors. Thus Drayton writes of his contemporary Nashe:

> "And surely Nashe, though he a *proser* were,
> A branch of laurel yet deserves to bear;"

that is, the ornament not of a 'proser,' but of a poet. The tacit assumption that vigour, animation, rapid movement, with all the precipitation of the spirit, belong to verse rather than to prose, and are the exclusive possession of it, is that which must explain the changed uses of the word.

Still it is according to a word's present signification that we must apply it now. It would be no excuse, having applied an insulting epithet to any, if we should afterwards plead that, tried by its etymology and primary usage, it had nothing offensive or insulting about it; although indeed Swift assures us that in his time such a plea was made and was allowed. "I remember," he says, "at a trial in Kent, where Sir George Rooke was indicted for calling a gentleman 'knave' and 'villain,' the lawyer for the defendant brought off his client by alledging that the words were not injurious; for 'knave' in the old and true signification imported only a servant; and 'villain' in

Latin is villicus, which is no more than a man employed in country labour, or rather a baily." The lawyer may have deserved his success for his ingenuity and his boldness; though, if Swift reports him aright, not certainly on the ground of the strict accuracy either of his Anglo-Saxon or his Latin.

The moral sense and conviction of men is often at work upon their words, giving them new turns in obedience to these convictions, of which their changed use will then remain a permanent record. Let me illustrate this by the history of our word 'sycophant.' You probably are acquainted with the story which the Greek scholiasts invented by way of explaining a word of which they knew nothing, namely that the 'sycophant' was a "manifester of figs," one who detected others in the act of exporting figs from Attica, an act forbidden, they asserted, by the Athenian law; and accused them to the people. Be this explanation worth what it may, the word obtained in Greek a more general sense; any accuser, and then any *false* accuser, was a 'sycophant;' and when the word was first adopted into the English language, it was in this meaning: thus an old English poet speaks of "the railing route of *sycophants*;" and Holland: "The poor man that hath nought to lose, is not afraid of the *sycophant*." But it has not kept this meaning; a 'sycophant' is now a fawning flatterer; not one who speaks ill of you behind your back; rather one who speaks good of you before your face,

but good which he does not in his heart believe. Yet how true a moral instinct has presided over the changed signification of the word. The calumniator and the flatterer, although they seem so opposed to one another, how closely united they really are. They grow out of the same root. The same baseness of spirit which shall lead one to speak evil of you behind your back, will lead him to fawn on you and flatter you before your face; there is a profound sense in that Italian proverb, "Who flatters me before, spatters me behind."

But it is not the moral sense only of men which is thus at work, modifying their words; but the immoral as well. If the good which men have and feel, penetrates into their speech, and leaves its deposit there, so does also the evil. Thus we may trace a constant tendency—in too many cases it has been a successful one—to empty words employed in the condemnation of evil, of the depth and earnestness of the moral reprobation which they once conveyed. Men's too easy toleration of sin, the feebleness of their moral indignation against it, brings about that the blame which words expressed once, has in some of them become much weaker now than once, has from others vanished altogether. "To do a *shrewd* turn," was once to do a *wicked* turn; and Chaucer, using 'shrewdness' by which to translate the Latin 'improbitas,' shows that it meant wickedness for him; nay, two murderers he calls two 'shrews,'—for there were, as already

noticed, male shrews once as well as female. But "a *shrewd* turn" now, while it implies a certain amount of sharp dealing, yet implies nothing more; and 'shrewdness' is applied to men rather in their praise than in their dispraise. And not 'shrewd' and 'shrewdness' only, but a multitude of other words,—I will only instance 'prank,' 'flirt,' 'luxury,' 'luxurious,' 'peevish,' 'wayward,' 'loiterer,' 'uncivil,'—conveyed once a much more earnest moral disapproval than now they do.

But I must bring this lecture to a close. I have but opened to you paths, which you, if you are so minded, can follow up for yourselves. We have learned lately to speak of men's 'antecedents;' the phrase is newly come up; and it is common to say that if we would know what a man really now is, we must know his 'antecedents,' that is, what he has been in time past. This is quite as true about words. If we would know what they now are, we must know what they have been; we must know, if possible, the date and place of their birth, the successive stages of their subsequent history, the company which they have kept, all the road which they have travelled, and what has brought them to the point at which now we find them; we must know, in short, their antecedents.

And let me say, without attempting to bring back school into these lectures which are out of school, that, seeking to do this, we might add an interest to our researches in the lexicon and the

dictionary which otherwise they could never have; that taking such words, for example, as ἐκκλησία, or παλιγγενεσία, or εὐτραπελία, or σοφιστής, or σχολαστικός, in Greek; as 'religio,' or 'sacramentum,' or 'urbanitas,' or 'superstitio,' in Latin; as 'libertine,' or 'casuistry,'* or 'humanity,' or 'humourous,' or 'danger,' or 'romance,' in English, and endeavouring to trace the manner in which one meaning grew out of and superseded another, and how they arrived at that use in which they have finally rested (if indeed before our English words there is not a future still), we shall derive, I believe, amusement, I am sure, instruction; we shall feel that we are really getting something, increasing the moral and intellectual stores of our minds; furnishing ourselves with that which may hereafter be of service to ourselves, may be of service to others—than which there can be no feeling more pleasurable, none more delightful. I shall be glad and thankful, if you can feel as much in regard of that lecture, which I now bring to its end.†

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* See Whewell, *History of Moral Philosophy in England*, pp. xxvii.—xxxii.

† For a fuller treatment of the subject of this lecture, see my *Select Glossary of English Words used formerly in senses different from their present*, 2nd Ed., London, 1859.

LECTURE V.

CHANGES IN THE SPELLING OF ENGLISH WORDS.

WHEN I announce to you that the subject of my lecture to-day will be English orthography, or the spelling of words in our native language, with the alterations which this has undergone, you may perhaps think with yourselves that a weightier, or, if not a weightier, at all events a more interesting, subject might have occupied this our concluding lecture. I cannot admit it to be wanting either in importance or in interest. Unimportant it certainly is not, but might well engage, as it often has engaged, the attention of those with far higher acquirements than any which I possess. Uninteresting it may be, by faults in the manner of treating it; but I am sure it ought as little to be this; and would never prove so in competent hands.* Let us then address ourselves to this matter, not without good hope that it may yield us both profit and pleasure.

I know not who it was that said, "The inven-

* In proof that it need not be so, I would only refer to a paper, *On Orthographical Expedients*, by Edwin Guest, Esq., in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. iii., p. 1.

tion of printing was very well; but, as compared to the invention of writing, it was no such great matter after all." Whoever it was who made this observation, it is clear that for him use and familiarity had not obliterated the wonder which there is in that, whereat we probably have long ceased to wonder at all—the power, namely, of representing sounds by written signs, of reproducing for the eye that which existed at first only for the ear: nor was the estimate which he formed of the relative value of these two inventions other than a just one. Writing indeed stands more nearly on a level with speaking, and deserves rather to be compared with it, than with printing; which, with all its utility, is yet of altogether another and inferior type of greatness: or, if this is too much to claim for writing, it may at any rate be affirmed to stand midway between the other two, and to be as much superior to the one as it is inferior to the other.

The intention of the written word, that which presides at its first formation, the end whereunto it is a mean, is by aid of symbols agreed on beforehand, to represent to the eye with as much accuracy as possible the spoken word.

It never fulfils this intention completely, and by degrees more and more imperfectly. Short as man's spoken word often falls of his thought, his written word falls often as short of his spoken. Several causes contribute to this. In the first place, the marks of imperfection and infirmity cleave to writing, as to every other invention of

man. All alphabets have been left incomplete. They have superfluous letters, letters, that is, which they do not want, because other letters already represent the sound which they represent; they have dubious letters, letters, that is, which say nothing certain about the sounds they stand for, because more than one sound is represented by them—our 'c' for instance, which sometimes has the sound of 's,' as in 'city,' sometimes of 'k,' as in 'cat;' they are deficient in letters, that is, the language has elementary sounds which have no corresponding letters appropriated to them, and can only be represented by combinations of letters. All alphabets, I believe, have some of these faults, not a few of them have all, and more. This then is one reason of the imperfect reproduction of the spoken word by the written. But another is, that the human voice is so wonderfully fine and flexible an organ, is able to mark such subtle and delicate distinctions of sound, so infinitely to modify and vary these sounds, that were an alphabet complete as human art could make it, did it possess eight and forty instead of four and twenty letters, there would still remain a multitude of sounds which it could only approximately give back.

But there is a further cause for the divergence which comes gradually to find place between men's spoken and their written words. What men do often, they will seek to do with the least possible trouble. There is nothing which they do oftener than repeat words; they will seek here

then to save themselves pains; they will contract two or more syllables into one; ('toto opere' will become 'topper;' 'vuestra merced,' 'usted;' and 'topside the other way,' 'topsy-turvey;'*) they will slur over, and thus after a while cease to pronounce, certain letters; for hard letters they will substitute soft; for those which require a certain effort to pronounce, they will substitute those which require little or none. Under the operation of these causes a gulf between the written and spoken word will not merely exist; but it will have the tendency to grow ever wider and wider. This tendency indeed will be partially counterworked by approximations which from time to time will by silent consent be made of the written word to the spoken; here and there a letter dropped in speech will be dropped also in writing, as the 's' in so many French words, where its absence is marked by a circumflex; a new shape, contracted or briefer, which a word has taken on the lips of men, will find its representation in their writing; as 'chirurgeon' will not merely be pronounced, but also spelt, 'surgeon,' and 'synodsman' 'sidesman.' Still for all this, and despite of these partial readjustments of the relations between the two, the anomalies will be infinite; there will be a multitude of written

* I have not observed this noticed in our Dictionaries as the original form of the phrase. There is no doubt however of the fact; see *Stanihurst's Ireland*, p. 33, in Holinshed's *Chronicles*.

letters which have ceased to be sounded letters; a multitude of words will exist in one shape upon our lips, and in quite another in our books.

It is inevitable that the question should arise—Shall these anomalies be meddled with? shall it be attempted to remove them, and bring writing and speech into harmony and consent—a harmony and consent which never indeed in actual fact at any period of the language existed, but which yet may be regarded as the object of written speech, as the idea which, however imperfectly realized, has, in the reduction of spoken sounds to written, floated before the minds of men? If the attempt is to be made, it is clear that it can only be made in one way. The alternative is not open, whether Mahomet shall go to the mountain, *or* the mountain to Mahomet. The spoken word is the mountain; it will not stir; it will resist all interference. It feels its own superior rights, that it existed the first, that it is, so to say, the elder brother; and it will never be induced to change itself for the purpose of conforming and complying with the written word. Men will not be persuaded to pronounce 'would' and 'de*b*t,' because they write 'would' and 'debt' severally with an 'l' and with a 'b': but what if they could be induced to write 'woud' and 'det,' because they pronounce so; and to deal in like manner with all other words, in which there exists at present a discrepancy between the word as it is spoken, and the word as it is written?

Here we have the explanation of that which in

the history of almost all literatures has repeated itself more than once, namely, the endeavour to introduce phonetic writing. It has certain plausibilities to rest on; it has its appeal to the unquestionable fact that the written word was intended to picture to the eye what the spoken word sounded in the ear. At the same time I believe that it would be impossible to introduce it; and, even if it *were* possible, that it would be most undesirable, and this for two reasons; the first being that the losses consequent upon its introduction would far outweigh the gains, even supposing those gains as great as the advocates of the scheme promise; the second, that these promised gains would themselves be only very partially realized, or not at all.

In the first place, I believe it to be impossible. It is clear that such a scheme must begin with the reconstruction of the alphabet. The first thing that the phonographers have perceived is the necessity for the creation of a vast number of new signs, the poverty of all existing alphabets, at any rate of our own, not yielding a several sign for all the several sounds in the language. Our English phonographers have therefore had to invent ten of these new signs or letters, which are henceforth to take their place with our *a*, *b*, *c*, and to enjoy equal rights with them. Rejecting two (*q*, *x*), and adding ten, they have raised their alphabet from twenty-six letters to thirty-four. But to procure the reception of such a reconstructed alphabet is simply an impossibility, as much an impossi-

bility as would be the reconstitution of the structure of the language in any points where it was manifestly deficient or illogical. Sciolists or scholars may sit down in their studies, and devise these new letters, and prove that we need them, and that the introduction of them would be a great gain, and a manifest improvement; and this may be all very true: but if they think they can induce a people to adopt them, they know little of the ways in which its alphabet is entwined with the whole innermost life of a people. One may freely own that all present alphabets are redundant here, are deficient there; our English perhaps is as greatly at fault as any, and with that we have chiefly to do. Unquestionably it has more letters than one to express one and the same sound; it has only one letter to express two or three sounds; it has sounds which are only capable of being expressed at all by awkward and roundabout expedients. Yet at the same time we must accept the fact, as we accept any other which it is out of our power to change—with regret, indeed, but with a perfect acquiescence: as one accepts the fact that Ireland is not some thirty or forty miles nearer to England—that it is so difficult to get round Cape Horn—that the climate of Africa is so fatal to European life. A people will no more quit their alphabet than they will quit their language; they will no more consent to modify the one *ab extra* than the other. Cæsar avowed that with all his power he could not introduce a new word, and certainly Claudius could not introduce

a new letter. Centuries may sanction the bringing in of a new one, or the dropping of an old. But to imagine that it is possible suddenly to introduce a group of ten new letters, as these reformers propose—they might just as feasibly propose that the English language should form its comparatives and superlatives on some entirely new scheme, say in Greek fashion, by the terminations 'oteros' and 'otatos;' or that we should agree to set up a dual; or that our substantives should return to our Anglo-Saxon declensions. Any one of these or like proposals would not betray a whit more ignorance of the eternal laws which regulate human language, and of the limits within which deliberate action upon it is possible, than does this of increasing our alphabet by ten entirely novel signs.

But grant it possible, grant our six and twenty letters to have so little sacredness in them that Englishmen would endure a crowd of upstart interlopers to mix themselves on an equal footing with them, still this could only be from a sense of the greatness of the advantage to be derived from this introduction. Now the vast advantage claimed by the advocates of the system is, that it would facilitate the learning to read, and wholly save the labour of learning to spell, which "on the present plan occupies," as they assure us, "at the very lowest calculation from three to five years." Spelling, it is said, would no longer need to be learned at all; since whoever knew the sound, would necessarily know also the spelling, this

being in all cases in perfect conformity with that. The anticipation of this gain rests upon two assumptions which are tacitly taken for granted, but both of them erroneous.

The first of these assumptions is, that all men pronounce all words alike, so that whenever they come to spell a word, they will exactly agree as to what the outline of its sound is. Now we are sure men will not do this from the fact that, before there was any fixed and settled orthography in our language, when therefore everybody was more or less a phonographer, seeking to write down the word as it sounded *to him*, (for he had no other law to guide him,) the variations of spelling were infinite. Take for instance the word 'sudden;' which does not seem to promise any great scope for variety. I have myself met with this word spelt in the following fifteen ways among our early writers: 'sodain,' 'sodaine,' 'sodan,' 'sodayne,' 'sodden,' 'sodein,' 'sodeine,' 'soden,' 'sodeyn,' 'suddain,' 'suddaine,' 'suddein,' 'suddeine,' 'sudden,' 'sudeyn.' Again, in how many ways was Raleigh's name spelt, or Shakespeare's? The same is evident from the spelling of uneducated persons in our own day. They have no other rule but the sound to guide them. How is it that they do not all spell alike; erroneously, it may be, as having only the sound for their guide, but still falling all into exactly the same errors? What is the actual fact? They not merely spell wrong, which might be laid to the charge of our perverse system of spelling, but with an inex-

haustible diversity of error, and that too in the case of simplest words. Thus the little town of Woburn would seem to give small room for caprice in spelling, while yet the postmaster there has made, from the superscription of letters that have passed through his hands, a collection of two hundred and forty-four varieties of ways in which the place has been spelt.* It may be replied that these were all or nearly all from the letters of the ignorant and uneducated. Exactly so;—but it is for their sakes, and to place them on a level with the educated, or rather to accelerate their education by the omission of a useless yet troublesome discipline, that the change is proposed. I wish to show you that after the change they would be just as much, or almost as much, at a loss in their spelling as now.

And another reason which would make it quite as necessary then to learn orthography as now, is the following. Pronunciation, as I have already noticed, is far too fine and subtle a thing to be more than approximated to, and indicated in the written letter. In a multitude of cases the difficulties which pronunciation presented would be sought to be overcome in different ways, and thus different spellings would arise; or if not so, one would have to be arbitrarily selected, and would have need to be learned, just as much as the spelling of a word now has need to be learned. I will only ask you, in proof of this which I affirm,

* *Notes and Queries*, No. 147.

to turn to any Pronouncing Dictionary. That greatest of all absurdities, a Pronouncing Dictionary, may be of some service to you in this matter; it will certainly be of none in any other. When you mark the elaborate and yet ineffectual artifices by which it toils after the finer distinctions of articulation, seeks to reproduce in letters what exists, and can only exist, as the spoken tradition of pronunciation, acquired from lip to lip by the organ of the ear, capable of being learned, but incapable of being taught; or when you compare two of these Dictionaries with one another, and mark the entirely different schemes and combinations of letters which they employ for representing the same sound to the eye; you will then perceive how idle the attempt to make the written in language commensurate with the sounded; you will own that not merely out of human caprice, ignorance, or indolence, the former falls short of and differs from the latter; but that this lies in the necessity of things, in the fact that man's *voice* can effect so much more than ever his *letter* can.* You will then perceive that there would be as much, or nearly as much, of the arbitrary in spelling which calls itself phonetic as in our present, that spelling would have to be learned just as really then as now. We should be unable to dismiss the spelling card even after the arrival of that great day, when, for ex-

* See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Croker's edit. 1848, p. 233.

ample, those lines of Pope which hitherto we have thus spelt and read,

> "But errs not nature from this gracious end,
> From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
> When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
> Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?"

when, I say, instead of this they should present themselves to our eyes in the following attractive form:

> "But ϥ erz not natiur from ðis gresus end,
> from burniŋ sunz when livid deþs disend,
> when erþkweks swoloƿ, or when tempests swip
> tounz tu wun grev, hol neconz tu ðe dip."

The scheme would not then fulfil its promises. Its vaunted gains, when we come to look closely at them, disappear. And now for its losses. There are in every language a vast number of words, which the ear does not distinguish from one another, but which are at once distinguishable to the eye by the spelling. I will only instance a few which are the same parts of speech; thus 'sun' and 'son;' 'virge' ('virga,' now obsolete) and 'verge;' 'reign,' 'rain,' and 'rein;' 'hair' and 'hare;' 'plate' and 'plait;' 'moat' and 'mote;' 'pear' and 'pair;' 'pain' and 'pane;' 'raise' and 'raze;' 'air' and 'heir;' 'ark' and 'arc;' 'mite' and 'might;' 'pour' and 'pore;' 'veil' and 'vale;' 'knight' and 'night;' 'knave' and 'nave;' 'pier' and 'peer;' 'rite' and 'right;' 'site' and 'sight;' 'aisle' and 'isle;' 'concent' and 'consent;' 'signet' and 'cygnet.' Now, of course, it is a real

disadvantage, and may be the cause of serious confusion, that there should be words in spoken language of entirely different origin and meaning, which yet cannot in sound be differenced from one another. The phonographers simply propose to extend this disadvantage already cleaving to our spoken language, to the written language as well. It is fault enough in the French language, that 'mêre' a mother, 'mer' the sea, 'maire' a mayor of a town, should have no perceptible difference between them in the spoken tongue; or again that in some there should be nothing to distinguish 'sans,' 'sang,' 'sent,' 'sens,' 's'en,' 'cent;' nor yet between 'ver,' 'vert,' 'verre' and 'vers.' Surely it is not very wise to propose gratuitously to extend the same fault to the written language as well.

This loss in so many instances of the power to discriminate between words, which, however liable to confusion now in our spoken language, are liable to none in our written, would be serious enough; but far more serious than this would be the loss which would constantly ensue, of all which visibly connects a word with the past, which tells its history, and indicates the quarter from which it has been derived. In how many English words a letter silent to the ear, is yet most eloquent to the eye—the *g* for instance in 'deign,' 'feign,' 'reign,' 'impugn,' telling as it does of 'dignor,' 'fingo,' 'regno,' 'impugno;' even as the *b* in 'debt,' 'doubt,' is not idle, but tells of 'debitum' and 'dubium.'

At present it is the written word which is in all languages their conservative element. In it is the abiding witness against the mutilations or other capricious changes in their shape which affectation, folly, ignorance, and half-knowledge would introduce. It is not indeed always able to hinder the final adoption of these corrupter forms, but does not fail to oppose to them a constant, and very often a successful, resistance. With the adoption of phonetic spelling, this witness would exist no longer; whatever was spoken would have also to be written, let it be never so barbarous, never so great a departure from the true form of the word. Nor is it merely probable that such a barbarizing process, such an adopting and sanctioning of a vulgarism, might take place, but among phonographers it already has taken place. We all probably are aware that there is a vulgar pronunciation of the word '*Europe*,' as though it were '*Eurup*.' Now it is quite possible that numerically more persons in England may pronounce the word in this manner than in the right; and therefore the phonographers are only true to their principles when they spell it in the fashion which they do, 'Eurup,' or indeed omitting the E at the beginning, 'Urup,'* with thus the life of the first syllable assailed no less than that of the second. What are the consequences? First, its relations with

* A chief phonographer writes to me to deny that this is the present spelling (1856) of 'Europe.' It was so when this paragraph was written.

the old mythology are at once and entirely broken off; secondly, its most probable etymology from two Greek words, signifying 'broad' and 'face,' Europe being so called from the *broad* line or *face* of coast which our continent presented to the Asiatic Greek, is totally obscured. But so far from the spelling servilely following the pronunciation, I should be bold to affirm that if ninety-nine out of every hundred persons in England chose to call Europe 'Urup,' this would be a vulgarism still, against which the written word ought to maintain its protest, not sinking down to their level, but rather seeking to elevate them to its own.*

And if there is much in orthography which is unsettled now, how much more would be unsettled then. Inasmuch as the pronunciation of words is

* Quintilian has expressed himself with the true dignity of a scholar on this matter (*Inst.* 1. 6. 45): Consuetudinem sermonis vocabo *consensum eruditorum;* sicut vivendi consensum bonorum.—How different from innovations like this the changes in the spelling of German which J. Grimm, so far as his own example may reach, *has* introduced; and the still bolder and more extensive ones which in the *Preface* to his *Deutsches Wörterbuch,* pp. liv.—lxii., he avows his desire to see introduced;—as the employment of *f*, not merely where it is at present used, but also wherever *v* is now employed; the substituting of the *v*, which would be thus disengaged, for *w*, and the entire dismissal of *w*. They may be advisable, or they may not; it is not for strangers to offer an opinion; but at any rate they are not a seizing of the fluctuating, superficial accidents of the present, and a seeking to give permanent authority to these, but they all rest on a deep historic study of the language, and of the true genius of the language.

continually altering, their spelling would of course have continually to alter too. For the fact that pronunciation is undergoing constant changes, although changes for the most part unmarked, or marked only by a few, would be abundantly easy to prove. Take a Pronouncing Dictionary of fifty or a hundred years ago; turn to almost any page, and you will observe schemes of pronunciation there recommended, which are now merely vulgarisms, or which have been dropped altogether. We gather from a discussion in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*,* that in his time 'great' was by some of the best speakers of the language pronounced 'greet,' not 'grate:' Pope usually rhymes it with 'cheat,' 'complete,' and the like; thus in the *Dunciad:*

"Here swells the shelf with Ogilby the *great,*
There, stamped with arms, Newcastle shines com*plete.*"

Spenser's constant use of the word a century and a half earlier, leaves no doubt that such was the invariable pronunciation of his time. Again, Pope rhymes 'obliged' with 'besieged;' and it has only ceased to be 'obl*ee*ged' almost in our own time. Who now drinks a cup of 'tay'? yet there is abundant evidence that this was the fashionable pronunciation in the first half of the last century; the word, that is, was still regarded as French: Locke writes it 'thé;' and in Pope's time though no longer written, it was still pronounced so. Take this couplet of his in proof:

* Croker's edit. 1848, pp. 57, 61, 233.

"Here thou, great Anna, whom three realms *obey*,
Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes *tea*."

So too a pronunciation which still survives, though scarcely among well-educated persons, I mean 'Room' for 'Rome,' must have been in Shakespeare's time the predominant one, else there would have been no point in that play on words where in *Julius Cæsar* Cassius, complaining that in all *Rome* there was not *room* for a single man, exclaims,

"Now is it *Rome* indeed, and *room* enough."

Samuel Rogers too assures us that in his youth "everybody said 'Lonnon' not 'London;' that Fox said 'Lonnon' to the last."

The following quotation from Swift will prove to you that I have been only employing here an argument, which he employed long ago against the phonographers of his time. He exposes thus the futility of their scheme*: "Another cause which has contributed not a little to the maiming of our language, is a foolish opinion advanced of late years that we ought to spell exactly as we speak: which, besides the obvious inconvenience of utterly destroying our etymology, would be a thing we should never see an end of. Not only the several towns and counties of England have a different way of pronouncing, but even here in London they clip their words after one manner

* *A proposal for correcting, improving and ascertaining the English Tongue*, 1711, Works, vol. ix. pp. 139—159.

about the court, another in the city, and a third in the suburbs; and in a few years, it is probable, will all differ from themselves, as fancy or fashion shall direct; all which, reduced to writing, would entirely confound orthography."

This much I have thought good to say in respect of that entire revolution in English orthography, which some rash innovators have proposed. Let me, dismissing them and their innovations, call your attention now to those changes in spelling which are constantly going forward, at some periods more rapidly than at others, but which never wholly cease out of a language; while at the same time I endeavour to trace, where this is possible, the motives and inducements which bring them about. It is a subject which none can neglect, who desire to obtain even a tolerably accurate acquaintance with their native tongue. Some principles have been laid down in the course of what has been said already, that may help us to judge whether the changes which have found place in our own have been for better or for worse. We shall find, if I am not mistaken, of both kinds.

There are alterations in spelling which are for the worse. Thus an altered spelling will sometimes obscure the origin of a word, concealing it from those who, but for this, would at once have known whence and what it was, and would have found both pleasure and profit in this knowledge. I need not say that in all those cases where the earlier spelling revealed the secret of the word,

told its history, which the latter defaces or conceals, the change has been injurious, and is to be regretted; while, at the same time, where it has thoroughly established itself, there is nothing to do but to acquiesce in it: the attempt to undo it would be absurd. Thus, when 'grocer' was spelt 'gro*sser*,' it was comparatively easy to see that he first had his name, because he sold his wares not by retail, but in the *gross*. 'Co*x*comb' tells us nothing now; but it did when spelt, as it used to be, 'co*cks*comb,' the *comb* of a *cock* being then an ensign or token which the fool was accustomed to wear. In 'grogra*m*' we are entirely to seek for the derivation; but in 'grogra*n*' or 'grogra*in*,' as earlier it was spelt, one could scarcely miss 'grosgrain,' the stuff of a *coarse grain* or woof. How many now understand 'woodbine?' but who could have helped understanding 'woodbin*d*' (Ben Jonson)? What a mischievous alteration in spelling is 'di*v*est' instead of 'de*v*est.' This change is so recent that I am tempted to ask whether it would not here be possible to return to the only intelligible spelling of this word?

'P*i*gmy' used formerly to be spelt 'p*y*gmy,' and so long as it was so, no Greek scholar could see the word, but at once he knew that by it were indicated manikins whose measure in height was no greater than that of a man's arm from the elbow to the closed *fist*.* Now he may know

* Pygmæi, quasi *cubitales* (Augustine).

this in other ways; but the word itself, so long as he assumes it to be rightly spelt, tells him nothing. Or again, the old spelling, 'diam*ant*,' was preferable to the modern 'diam*ond*.' It was preferable, because it told more of the quarter from whence the word had reached us. 'Diamant' and 'adamant' are in fact only two different adoptions on the part of the English tongue, of one and the same Greek, which afterwards became a Latin, word. The primary meaning of 'adamant' is, as you know, the indomitable, and it was a name given at first to steel as the hardest of metals; but afterwards transferred* to the most precious among all the precious stones, as that which in power of resistance surpassed everything besides.

Neither are new spellings to be commended, which obliterate or obscure the relationship of a word with others to which it is really allied; separating from one another, for those not thoroughly acquainted with the subject, words of the same family. Thus when '*j*aw' was spelt '*ch*aw,' no

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* First so used by Theophrastus in Greek, and by Pliny in Latin.—The real identity of the two words explains Milton's use of 'diamond' in *Paradise Lost*, b. 7; and also in that sublime passage in his *Apology for Smectymnuus*: "Then zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete *diamond*."—Diez (*Wörterbuch d. Roman. Sprachen*, p. 123) supposes, not very probably, that it was under a certain influence of '*dia*fano,' the translucent, that 'adamante' was in the Italian, from whence we have derived the word, changed into '*dia*mante.'

one could miss its connexion with the verb 'to chew.' Now probably ninety-nine out of a hundred who use both words, are entirely unaware of any relationship between them. It is the same with 'cousin' (consanguineus), and 'to cozen' or to deceive. I do not propose to determine which of these words should conform itself to the spelling of the other. There was great irregularity in the spelling of both from the first; yet for all this, it was then better than now, when a permanent distinction has established itself between them, keeping out of sight that 'to cozen' is in all likelihood to deceive under show of kindred and affinity; which if it be so, Shakespeare's words,

> "*Cousins* indeed, and by their uncle *cozened*
> Of comfort,"*

will be found to contain not a pun, but an etymology. The real relation between 'bliss' and 'to bless' is in like manner at present obscured.

The omission of a letter, or the addition of a letter, may each effectually do its work in keeping out of sight the true character and origin of a word. Thus the omission of a letter. When the first syllable of 'bran-new,' was spelt 'brand' with a final 'd,' 'brand-new,' how vigorous an image did the word contain. The 'brand' is the fire, and 'brand-new' equivalent to 'fire-new' (Shakespeare), is that which is fresh and bright,

* *Richard III.* Act iv. Sc. 4.

as being newly come from the forge and fire. As now spelt, 'bran-new' conveys to us no image at all.

Again, you have the word 'scrip'—as a 'scrip' of paper, government 'scrip.' Is this the same word with the Saxon 'scrip,' a wallet, having in some strange manner obtained these meanings so different and so remote? Have we here only two different applications of one and the same word, or two homonyms, wholly different words, though spelt alike? We have only to note the way in which the first of these 'scrips' used to be written, namely with a final 't,' not 'scrip' but 'scrip*t*,' and we are at once able to answer the question. This 'scrip' is a Latin, as the other is an Anglo-Saxon, word, and meant at first simply a *written* (scripta) piece of paper—a circumstance which since the omission of the final 't' may easily escape our knowledge. 'Afraid' was spelt much better in old times with the double 'ff,' than with the single 'f' as now. It was then clear that it was not another form of 'afeared,' but wholly separate from it, the participle of the verb 'to affray,' 'affrayer,' or, as it is now written, 'effrayer.'

In the cases hitherto adduced, it has been the omission of a letter which has clouded and concealed the etymology. The intrusion of a letter sometimes does the same. Thus in the early editions of *Paradise Lost*, and in all writers of that time, you will find 'scent,' an odour, spelt 'sent.' It was better so; there is no other noun

substantive 'sent,' with which it is in danger of being confounded; while its relation with 'sentio,' with 'r*esent*,'* 'dis*sent*,' and the like, is put out of sight by its novel spelling; the intrusive 'c' serves only to mislead. The same thing was attempted with 'site,' 'situate,' 'situation,' spelt for a time by many, 'scite,' 'scituate,' 'scituation;' but it did not continue with these. Again, 'whole,' in Wiclif's Bible, and indeed much later, occasionally as far down as Spenser, is spelt 'hole,' without the 'w' at the beginning. The present orthography may have the advantage of at once distinguishing the word to the eye from any other; but at the same time the initial 'w,' now prefixed, hides its relation to the verb 'to heal,' with which it is closely allied. The 'whole' man is he whose hurt is 'healed' or covered (we say of the convalescent that he 'recovers'); 'whole' being closely allied to 'hale' (integer), from which also by its modern spelling it is divided. 'Wholesome' has naturally followed the fortunes of 'whole;' it was spelt 'holsome' once.

Of 'island' too our present spelling is inferior to the old, inasmuch as it suggests a hybrid forma-

* How close this relationship was once, not merely in respect of etymology, but also of significance, a passage like this will prove: "Perchance, as vultures are said to smell the earthiness of a dying corpse; so this bird of prey [the evil spirit which personated Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14] *resented* a worse than earthly savor in the soul of Saul, as evidence of his death at hand." (Fuller, *The Profane State*, b. 5. c. 4.)

tion, as though the word were made up of the Latin 'insula,' and the Saxon 'land.' It is quite true that 'isle' *is* in relation with, and descent from, 'insula,' 'isola,' 'île;' and hence probably the misspelling of 'island.' This last however has nothing to do with 'insula,' being identical with the German 'eiland,' the Anglo-Saxon 'ealand,' and signifying the sea-land, or land girt round with the sea. And it is worthy of note that this 's' in the first syllable of 'island' is quite of modern introduction. In all the earlier versions of the Scriptures, and in the Authorized Version as at first set forth, it is 'iland;' while in proof that this is not accidental, it may be observed that, while 'iland' has not the 's,' 'isle' has it (see Rev. i. 9). 'Iland' indeed is the spelling which we meet with far down into the seventeenth century.

What has just been said of 'island' leads me as by a natural transition to observe that one of the most frequent causes of alteration in the spelling of a word is a wrongly assumed derivation. It is then sought to bring the word into harmony with, and to make it by its spelling suggest, this derivation, which has been erroneously thrust upon it. Here is a subject which, followed out as it deserves, would form an interesting and instructive chapter in the history of language. Let me offer one or two small contributions to it; noting first by the way how remarkable an evidence we have in this fact, of the manner in which not the learned only, but all persons learned and unlearned alike, crave

to have a meaning in the words which they employ, crave to have these words not body only, but body and soul. What an attestation, I say, of this lies in the fact that where a word in its proper derivation is unintelligible to them, they will shape and mould it into some other form, not enduring that it should be a mere inert sound without sense in their ears; and if they do not know its right origin, will rather put into it a wrong one, than that it should have for them no meaning, and suggest no derivation at all.*

„There is probably no language in which such a process has not been going forward; in which it is not the explanation, in a vast number of instances, of changes in spelling and even in form, which words have undergone. I will offer a few examples of it from foreign tongues, before adducing any from our own. 'Pyramid' is a word, the spelling of which was affected in the Greek by an erroneous assumption of its derivation; the consequences of this error surviving in our own word to the present day. It is spelt by us with a 'y' in the first syllable, as it was spelt with the υ corresponding in the Greek. But why was this? It was because the Greeks assumed that the pyramids were so named from their having the appearance of *flame* going up into a point,† and so they spelt 'pyramid,' that they might find πῦρ or 'pyre' in it; while in fact

* Diez looks with much favour on this process, and calls it, ein sinnreiches mittel fremdlinge ganz heimisch zu machen.

† Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii. 15, 28

'pyramid' has nothing to do with flame or fire at all; being, as those best qualified to speak on the matter declare to us, an Egyptian word of quite a different signification, and the Coptic letters being much better represented by the diphthong 'ei' than by the letter 'y,' as no doubt, but for this mistaken notion of what the word was intended to mean, they would have been.

Once more—the form 'Hierosolyma,' wherein the Greeks reproduced the Hebrew 'Jerusalem,' was intended in all probability to express that the city so called was the *sacred* city of the *Solymi*.* At all events the intention not merely of reproducing the Hebrew word, but also of making it significant in Greek, of finding ἱερόν in it, is plainly discernible. For indeed the Greeks were exceedingly intolerant of foreign words, till they had laid aside their foreign appearance—of all words which they could not thus quicken with a Greek soul; and, with a very characteristic vanity, an ignoring of all other tongues but their own, assumed with no apparent misgivings that all words, from whatever quarter derived, were to be explained by Greek etymologies.†

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* Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 2.

† Let me illustrate this by further instances in a note. Thus βούτυρον, from which, through the Latin, our 'butter' has descended to us, is borrowed (Pliny, *H.N.* xxviii. 9) from a Scythian word, now to us unknown: yet it is sufficiently plain that the Greeks so shaped and spelt it as to contain apparent allusion to *cow* and *cheese*; there is in βούτυρον an evident feeling after βοῦς and τυρόν. Bozra, meaning citadel

'Tartar' is another word, of which it is at least possible that a wrongly assumed derivation has modified the spelling, and indeed not the spelling only, but the very shape in which we now possess it. To many among us it may be known that the people designated by this appellation are not properly 'Tartars,' but 'Tatars;' and you sometimes perhaps have noted the omission of the 'r' on the part of those who are curious in their spelling. How then, it may be asked, did the form 'Tartar'

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in Hebrew and Phœnician, and the name, no doubt, which the citadel of Carthage bore, becomes *Βύρσα* on Greek lips; and then the well known legend of the ox-hide was invented upon the name; not having suggested it, but being itself suggested by it. Herodian (v. 6) reproduces the name of the Syrian goddess Astarte in a shape that is significant also for Greek ears—*Ἀστροάρχη*, The Star-ruler, or Star-queen. When the apostate and hellenizing Jews assumed Greek names, 'Eliakim' or "Whom God has set," became 'Alcimus' (*ἄλκιμος*) or The Strong (1 Macc. vii. 5). Latin examples in like kind are 'comissatio,' spelt continually 'comessatio,' and 'comessation' by those who sought to naturalize it in England, as though it were connected with 'cŏmedo,' to eat, beng indeed the substantive from the verb 'cōmissari' (= *κωμάζειν*), to revel; as Plutarch, whose Latin is in general not very accurate, long ago correctly observed, and 'orichalcum,' spelt often '*au*richalcum,' as though it were a composite metal of mingled *gold* and brass; being indeed the *mountain* brass (*ὀρείχαλκος*). The miracle play, which is 'mystère,' in French, whence our English 'mystery,' was originally written 'mistère,' being properly derived from 'ministère,' and having its name because the clergy, the *ministri* Ecclesiæ, conducted it. This was forgotten, and it then took its present form of 'mystery,' as though so called because the mysteries of the faith were in it set out.

arise? When the terrible hordes of middle Asia burst in upon civilized Europe in the thirteenth century, many beheld in the ravages of their innumerable cavalry a fulfilment of that prophetic word in the Revelation (chap. ix.) concerning the opening of the bottomless pit; and from this belief ensued the change of their name from 'Tatars' to 'Tartars,' which was thus put into closer relation with 'Tartarus' or hell, out of which their multitudes were supposed to have proceeded.*

Another good example in the same kind is the German word 'sündflut,' the Deluge, which is now so spelt as to signify a 'sinflood,' the plague or *flood* of waters brought on the world by the *sins* of mankind; and probably some of us have before this admired the pregnant significance of the word. Yet the old High German word had originally no such intention; it was spelt 'sinfluot,' that is, the great flood; and as late as Luther, indeed in Luther's own translation of the Bible, is so spelt as to make plain that the notion of a '*sin*-flood' had not yet found its way into, even as it had not affected the spelling of, the word.†

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* We have here, in this bringing of the words by their supposed etymology together, the explanation of the fact that Spenser (*Fairy Queen*, i. 7, 44), Middleton (*Works*, vol. 5. pp. 524, 528, 538), and others employ 'Tartary' as equivalent to 'Tartarus' or hell.

† For a full discussion of this matter and fixing of the period at which 'sinfluot' became 'sündflut,' see the *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* vol. ii. p. 613; and Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 2nd ed. vol. ii. p. 210.

But to look now nearer home for our examples. The little raisins brought from Greece, which play so important a part in one of the national dishes of England, the Christmas plum-pudding, used to be called 'corinths;' and so you would find them in mercantile lists of a hundred years ago: either that for the most part they were shipped from Corinth, the principal commercial city in Greece, or because they grew in large abundance in the immediate district round about it. Their likeness in shape and size and general appearance to our own currants, working together with the ignorance of the great majority of English people about any such place as Corinth, soon brought the name 'corinths' into 'currants,' which now with a certain unfitness they bear; being not currants at all, but dried grapes, though grapes of diminutive size.

'*Court*-cards,' that is, the king, queen, and knave in each suit, were once '*coat*-cards;'* having their name from the long splendid 'coat' (vestis talaris) with which they were arrayed. Probably 'coat' after a while did not perfectly convey its original meaning and intention; being no more in common use for the long garment reaching down to the heels; and then 'coat' was easily exchanged for 'court,' as the word is now both spelt and pronounced, seeing that nowhere so fitly as in a Court should such splendidly arrayed personages be found. A public house in the neighbourhood of London having a few years since for its sign "The George

* Ben Jonson, *The New Inn*, Act i. Sc. i.

Canning" is already "The George and *Cannon*," —so rapidly do these transformations proceed, so soon is that forgotten which we suppose would never be forgotten. "Welsh *rarebit*" becomes "Welsh *rabbit*;" and '*farced*' or stuffed 'meat' becomes "*forced* meat." Even the mere determination to make a word *look* English, to put it into an English shape, without thereby so much as seeming to attain any result in the way of etymology, this is very often sufficient to bring about a change in its spelling, and even in its form.* It is thus that 'sipahi' has become 'sepoy;' and only so could 'weissager' have taken its present form of 'wiseacre.'†

It is not very uncommon for a word, while it is derived from one word, to receive a certain impulse and modification from another. This extends sometimes beyond the spelling, and in cases where it does so, would hardly belong to our present theme. Still I may notice an instance or two.

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* 'Leghorn' is sometimes quoted as an example of this; but erroneously; for, as Admiral Smyth has shown (*The Mediterranean*, p. 409) 'Livorno' is itself rather the modern corruption, and 'Ligorno' the name found on the earlier charts.

† Exactly the same happens in other languages; thus, 'armbrust,' a crossbow, *looks* German enough, and yet has nothing to do with 'arm' or 'brust,' being a contraction of 'arcubalista,' but a contraction under these influences. As little has 'abenteuer' anything to do with 'abend' or 'theuer,' however it may seem to be connected with them, being indeed the Provencal 'adventura.' And 'weissagen' in its earlier forms had nothing in common with 'sagen.'

Thus our 'obsequies' is the Latin 'exequiæ,' but formed under a certain impulse of 'obsequium,' and seeking to express and include the observant honour of that word. 'To refuse' is 'recusare,' while yet it has derived the 'f' of its second syllable from 'refutare;' it is a medley of the two. The French 'rame,' an oar, is 'remus,' but that modified by an unconscious recollection of 'ramus.' 'Orange' is no doubt a Persian word, which has reached us through the Arabic, and which the Spanish 'naranja' more nearly represents than any form of it existing in the other languages of Europe. But what so natural as to think of the orange as the *golden* fruit, especially when the "*aurea* mala" of the Hesperides were familiar to all antiquity? There cannot be a doubt that 'aurum,' 'oro,' 'or,' made themselves felt in the shapes which the word assumed in the languages of the West, and that here we have the explanation of the change in the first syllable, as in the low Latin 'aurantium,' 'orangia,' and in the French 'orange,' which has given us our own.

It is foreign words, or words adopted from foreign languages, as might beforehand be expected, which are especially subjected to such transformations as these. The soul which the word once had in its own language, having, for as many as do not know that language, departed from it, or at least not being now any more to be recognized by such as employ the word, these are not satisfied till they have put another soul into it, and it has thus become alive to them again. Thus

—to take first one or two very familiar instances, but which serve as well as any other to illustrate my position—the Bellerophon becomes for our sailors the 'Billy Ruffian,' for what can they know of the Greek mythology, or of the slayer of Chimæra? an iron steamer, the Hirondelle, now or lately plying on the Tyne, is the 'Iron Devil.' '*Contre* danse,' or dance in which the parties stand *face to face* with one another, and which ought to have appeared in English as '*counter* dance,' does become '*country* dance,'* as though it were the dance of the country folk and rural districts, as distinguished from the quadrille and waltz and more artificial dances of the town. A well known rose, the "rose *des quatre saisons*," or of the four seasons, becomes on the lips of some of our gardeners, the "rose of the *quarter sessions*," though here it is probable that the eye has misled, rather than the ear. 'Dent de lion,' (it is spelt 'dent-

* It is upon this word that De Quincey (*Life and Manners*, p. 70, American Ed.) says excellently well: "It is in fact by such corruptions, by off-sets upon an old stock, arising through ignorance or mispronunciation originally, that every language is frequently enriched; and new modifications of thought, unfolding themselves in the progress of society, generate for themselves concurrently appropriate expressions. . . . . It must not be allowed to weigh against a word once fairly naturalized by all, that originally it crept in upon an abuse or a corruption. Prescription is as strong a ground of legitimation in a case of this nature, as it is in law. And the old axiom is applicable—Fieri non debuit, factum valet. Were it otherwise, languages would be robbed of much of their wealth."

delyon' in our early writers) becomes 'dandylion,' "*chaude* melée," or an affray in *hot* blood, "*chance*-medley," 'causey' (chaussée) becomes 'causeway,' 'rachitis' 'rickets,' and in French 'mandragora' 'main de gloire.'

'Necromancy' is another word which, if not now, yet for a long period was erroneously spelt, and indeed assumed a different shape, under the influence of an erroneous derivation; which, curiously enough, even now that it has been dismissed, has left behind it the marks of its presence, in our common phrase, "the *Black* Art." I need hardly remind you that 'necromancy' is a Greek word, which signifies, according to its proper meaning, a prophesying by aid of the dead, or that it rests on the presumed power of raising up by potent spells the dead, and compelling them to give answers about things to come. We all know that it was supposed possible to exercise such power; we have a very awful example of it in the story of the witch of Endor, and a very horrid one in Lucan.* But the Latin medieval writers, whose Greek was either little or none, spelt the word, 'nigromantia,' as if its first syllables had been Latin: at the same time, not wholly forgetting the original meaning, but in fact getting round to it though by a wrong process, they understood the dead by these 'nigri,' or blacks, whom they had brought into the word.† Down

* *Phars.* vi. 720—830.

† Thus in a *Vocabulary*, 1475: Nigromansia dicitur divinatio facta *per nigros*.

to a rather late period we find the forms, '*negro*mancer' and '*negro*mancy' frequent in English.

'Pleurisy' used often to be spelt, (I do not think it is so now,) without an 'e' in the first syllable, evidently on the tacit assumption that it was from *plus pluris*. When Shakespeare falls into an error, he "makes the offence gracious;" yet, I think, he would scarcely have written,

> "For goodness growing to a *plurisy*
> Dies of his own *too much*,"

but that *he* too derived 'plurisy' from *pluris*. This, even with the "small Latin and less Greek," which Ben Jonson allows him, he scarcely would have done, had the word presented itself in that form, which by right of its descent from πλευρά (being a pain, stitch, or sickness *in the side*) it ought to have possessed. Those who for 'crucible' wrote 'chrysoble' (Jeremy Taylor does so,) must evidently have done this under the assumption that the Greek for *gold*, and not the Latin for *cross*, lay at the foundation of this word. 'Anthymn' instead of 'anthem' (Barrow so spells the word), rests plainly on a wrong etymology, even as this spelling clearly betrays what that wrong etymology is. 'Rhyme' with a 'y' is a modern misspelling; and would never have been but for the undue influence which the Greek 'rhythm' has exercised upon it. Spenser and his cotemporaries spell it 'rime.' 'Abominable' was by some etymologists of the seventeenth century spelt 'abhominable,' as though it were that which

departed from the human (ab homine) into the bestial or devilish.

In all these words which I have adduced last, the correct spelling has in the end resumed its sway. It is not so with 'frontispiece,' which ought to be spelt 'frontispice,' (it was so by Milton and others), being the low Latin 'frontispicium,' from 'frons' and 'aspicio,' the forefront of the building, that part which presents itself to the view. It was only the entirely ungrounded notion that the word 'piece' constitutes the last syllable, which has given rise to our present orthography.*

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* As 'orthography' itself means properly "*right* spelling," it might be a curious question whether it is permissible to speak of an *incorrect ortho*graphy, that is, of a *wrong right*-spelling. The question which would be thus started is one of not unfrequent recurrence, and it is very worthy of observation how often, so soon as we take note of etymologies, this *contradictio in adjecto* is found to occur. I will here adduce a few examples from the Greek, the Latin, the German, and from our own tongue. Thus the Greeks having no convenient word to express a rider, apart from a rider *on a horse*, did not scruple to speak of the *horse*man (ἱππεύς) upon an *elephant*. They often allowed themselves in a like inaccuracy, where certainly there was no necessity; as in using ἀνδριάς of the statue of a *woman*; where it would have been quite as easy to have used εἰκών or ἄγαλμα. So too their 'table' (τράπεζα=τετράπεζα) involved probably the *four* feet which commonly support one; yet they did not shrink from speaking of a *three*-footed table (τρίπους τράπεζα), in other words, a "*three*-footed *four*-footed;" much as though we should speak of a "*three*-footed *quadru*ped." Homer writes of a 'hecatomb' not of a *hundred*, but of twelve, oxen; and elsewhere of Hebe he says, in words not repro-

You may, perhaps, wonder that I have dwelt so long on these details of spelling; that I have bestowed on them so much of my own attention, that I have claimed for them so much of yours; yet in truth I cannot regard them as unworthy of our very closest heed. For indeed of how much beyond itself is accurate or inaccurate spelling the certain indication. Thus when we meet 'syren,' for 'siren,' as so strangely often we do, almost always in newspapers, and often where we should hardly have expected (I met it lately in the *Quarterly Review*,

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ducible in English, νέκταρ ἐωνοχόει. 'Tetrarchs' were often rulers of quite other than *fourth* parts of a land. Ἄκρατος had so come to stand for wine, without any thought more of its signifying originally the *unmingled*, that St. John speaks of ἄκρατος κεκερασμένος (Rev. xiv. 10), or the unmingled mingled. Boxes in which precious ointments were contained were so commonly of alabaster, that the name came to be applied to them whether they were so or not; and Theocritus celebrates "*golden* alabasters." Cicero having to mention a water-clock is obliged to call it a *water sun*dial (solarium ex aquâ). Columella speaks of a "*vintage* of honey" (vindemia mellis), and Horace invites his friend to im*pede*, not his *foot*, but his head, with myrtle (*caput* im*ped*ire myrto.) Thus too a German writer who desired to tell of the golden shoes with which the folly of Caligula adorned his horse could scarcely avoid speaking of *golden* hoof-*irons*. The same inner contradiction is involved in such language as our own, a "*false ver*dict," a "*steel cuirass*" ('coriacea' from corium, leather), "antics new" (Harrington's *Ariosto*), an "*erroneous etymo*logy," a "*corn chandler*," that is, a "*corn candle*-maker," "*rather late*," 'rather' being the comparative of 'rathe,' early, and thus "rather late" being indeed "more early late;" and in others.

and again in Gifford's *Massinger*), how difficult it is not to be "judges of evil thoughts," and to take this slovenly misspelling as the specimen and evidence of an inaccuracy and ignorance which reaches very far wider than the single word which is before us. But why is it that so much significance is ascribed to a wrong spelling? Because ignorance of a word's spelling at once argues ignorance of its origin and derivation. I do not mean that one who spells rightly may not be ignorant of it too, but he who spells wrongly is certainly so. Thus, to recur to the example I have just adduced, he who for 'siren' writes 'syren,' certainly knows nothing of the magic *cords* (σειραί) of song, by which those fair enchantresses were supposed to draw those that heard them to their ruin.

Correct or incorrect orthography being, then, this note of accurate or inaccurate knowledge, we may confidently conclude where two spellings of a word exist, and are both employed by persons who generally write with precision and scholarship, that there must be something to account for this. It will generally be worth your while to inquire into the causes which enable both spellings to hold their ground and to find their supporters, not ascribing either one or the other to mere carelessness or error. It will in these cases often be found that two spellings exist, because two views of the word's origin exist, and each of those spellings is the correct expression of one of these. The question therefore which way of spelling should continue, and wholly supersede the other,

and which, while the alternative remains, we should ourselves employ, can only be settled by settling which of these etymologies deserves the preference. So is it, for example, with 'chymist' and 'chemist,' neither of which has obtained in our common use the complete mastery over the other. It is not here, as in some other cases, that one is certainly right, the other as certainly wrong: but they severally represent two different etymologies of the word, and each is correct according to its own. If we are to spell 'chymist' and 'chymistry,' it is because these words are considered to be derived from the Greek word, χυμός, sap; and the chymic art will then have occupied itself first with distilling the juice and sap of plants, and will from this have derived its name. I have little doubt, however, that the other spelling, 'chemist,' not 'chymist,' is the correct one. It was not with the distillation of herbs, but with the amalgamation of metals, that chemistry occupied itself at its rise, and the word embodies a reference to Egypt, the land of Ham or 'Cham,'* in which this art was first practised with success.

Of how much confusion the spelling which used to be so common, 'satyr' for 'satire,' is at once the consequence, the expression, and again the cause; not indeed that this confusion first began with us;† for the same already found place in the

* Χημία, the name of Egypt; see Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.* c. 33.

† We have a notable evidence how deeply rooted this error was, how long this confusion endured, of the way in which it

Latin, where 'satyricus' was continually written for 'satiricus' out of a false assumption of the identity between the Roman *satire* and the Greek *satyric* drama. The Roman 'satira,'—I speak of things familiar to many of my hearers,—is properly a *full* dish (lanx being understood)—a dish heaped up with various ingredients, a 'farce' (according to the original signification of that word), or hodge-podge; and the word was transferred from this to a form of poetry which at first admitted the utmost variety in the materials of which it was composed, and the shapes into which these materials were wrought up; being the only form of poetry which the Romans did *not* borrow from the Greeks. Wholly different from this, having no one point of contact with it in its form, its history, or its intention, is the 'satyric' drama of Greece, so called because Silenus and the 'Satyrs' supplied the chorus; and in their naive selfishness, and mere animal instincts, held up before men a mirror of what they would be, if only the divine, which is also the truly human, element of

was shared by the learned as well as the unlearned, in Milton's *Apology for Smectymnuus*, sect. 7, which everywhere presumes the identity of the 'satyr' and the 'satirist.' It was Isaac Casaubon who first effectually dissipated it even for the learned world. The results of his investigations were made popular for the unlearned reader by Dryden, in the very instructive *Discourse on Satirical Poetry*, prefixed to his translations of Juvenal; but the confusion still survives, and 'satyrs' and 'satires,' the Greek 'satyric' drama, the Latin 'satirical' poetry, are still assumed by most to have something to do with one another.

humanity, were withdrawn; what man, all that properly made him man being withdrawn, would prove.

And then what light, as we have already seen, does the older spelling of a word often cast upon its etymology; how often does it clear up the mystery, which would otherwise have hung about it, or which *had* hung about it till some one had noticed and turned to profit this its earlier spelling. Thus 'dirge' is always spelt 'dirige' in early English. This 'dirige' may be the first word in a Latin psalm or prayer once used at funerals; there is a reasonable probability that the explanation of the word is here; at any rate, if it is not here, it is nowhere. The derivation of 'midwife' is uncertain, and has been the subject of discussion; but when we find it spelt 'medewife' and 'meadwife,' in Wiclif's Bible, this leaves hardly a doubt that it is the *wife* or woman who acts for a *mead* or reward. In cases too where there was no mystery hanging about a word, how often does the early spelling make clear to all that which was before only known to those who had made the language their study. For example, if an early edition of Spenser should come into your hands, or a modern one in which the early spelling is retained, what continual lessons in English might you derive from it. Thus 'nostril' is always spelt by him and his cotemporaries 'nosethrill;' a little earlier it was 'nosethirle.' Now 'to thrill' is the same as to drill or pierce; it is plain then here at once that the word signifies the orifice or opening

with which the *nose* is *thrilled,* drilled, or pierced. We might have read the word for ever in our modern spelling without being taught this. 'Ell' tells us nothing about itself; but in 'eln,' used in Holland's translation of Camden, we recognize 'ulna' at once.

Again, the 'morris' or 'morrice-dance,' which is alluded to so often by our early poets, as it is now spelt informs us nothing about itself; but read '*moriske* dance,' as it is generally spelt by Holland and his cotemporaries, and you will scarcely fail to perceive that of which indeed there is no manner of doubt; namely, that it was so called either because it was really, or was supposed to be, a dance in use among the *moriscoes* of Spain, and from thence introduced into England.*

Again, philologers tell us, and no doubt rightly, that our 'cray-fish,' or 'craw-fish,' is the French 'écrevisse.' This is true, but certainly it is not self-evident. Trace however the word through these successive spellings, 'krevys' (Lydgate), 'crevish' (Gascoigne), 'craifish' (Holland), and the chasm between 'cray-fish' or 'craw-fish' and 'écrevisse' is by aid of these three intermediate spellings bridged over at once; and in the fact of our Gothic 'fish' finding its way into

* "I have seen him
Caper upright, like a wild *Mórisco,*
Shaking the bloody darts, as he his bells."
Shakespeare, 2 *Henry VI.* Act iii. Sc. 1.

this French word we see only another example of a law, which has been already abundantly illustrated in this lecture.*

* In the reprinting of old books it is often very difficult to determine how far the old shape in which words present themselves should be retained, how far they should be conformed to present usage. It is comparatively easy to lay down as a rule that in books intended for popular use, wherever the form of the word is not affected by the modernizing of the spelling, as where this modernizing consists merely in the dropping of superfluous letters, there it shall take place; as who would wish our Bibles to be now printed letter for letter after the edition of 1611, or Shakespeare with the orthography of the first folio; but wherever more than the spelling, the actual shape, outline, and character of the word has been affected by the changes which it has undergone, that in all such cases the earlier form shall be held fast. The rule is a judicious one; but when it is attempted to carry it out, it is not always easy to draw the line, and to determine what affects the form and essence of a word, and what does not. About some words there can be no doubt; and therefore when a modern editor of Fuller's *Church History* complacently announces that he has allowed himself in such changes as 'dirige' into 'dirge,' 'barreter' into 'barrister,' 'synonymas' into 'synonymous'!, 'extempory' into 'extemporary,' 'scited' into 'situated,' 'vancurrier' into 'avant-courier;' he at the same time informs us that for all purposes of the study of the English language (and few writers are for this more important than Fuller), he has made his edition utterly worthless. Or again, when modern editors of Shakespeare print, and that without giving any intimation of the fact,

"Like quills upon the fretful *porcupine*,"

he having written, and in his first folio and quarto the words standing,

"Like quills upon the fretful *porpentine*,"

this being the earlier, and in Shakespeare's time the more

In other ways also an accurate taking note of the spelling of words, and of the successive changes which it has undergone, will often throw light upon them. Thus we may know, others having assured us of the fact, that 'ant' and 'emmet' were originally only two different spellings of one and the same word; but we may be perplexed to understand how two forms of a word, now so different, could ever have diverged from a single root. When however we find the different spellings, 'emmet,' 'emet,' 'amet,' 'amt,' 'ant,' the gulf which appeared to separate 'emmet' from 'ant' is bridged over at once, and we not merely know on the assurance of others that these two are in fact identical, their differences being only superficial, but we perceive clearly in what manner they are so.

Even before any close examination of the matter, it is hard not to suspect that 'runagate' is in fact another form of 'renegade,' slightly transformed, as so many words, to put an English signification into its first syllable; and then the meaning gradually modified in obedience to the new derivation which was assumed to be its original and true one. Our suspicion of this is very greatly strengthened (for we see how very closely the words approach one another), by the fact that

common form of the word, they must be considered as taking a very unwarrantable liberty with his text; and no less, when they substitute 'Kenilworth' for 'Killingworth,' which he wrote, and which was his, Marlowe's, and generally the earlier form of the name.

'renegade' is constantly spelt 'renegate' in our old authors, while at the same time the denial of *faith*, which is now a necessary element in 'renegade,' and one differencing it inwardly from 'runagate,' is altogether wanting in early use—the denial of *country* and of the duties thereto owing being all that is implied in it. Thus it is constantly employed in Holland's *Livy* as a rendering of 'perfuga;'* while in the one passage where 'runagate' occurs in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms (Ps. lxviii. 6), a reference to the original will show that the translators could only have employed it there on the ground that it also expressed rebel, revolter, and not runaway merely.

I might easily occupy your attention much longer, so little barren or unfruitful does this subject of spelling appear likely to prove; but all things must have an end; and as I concluded my first lecture with a remarkable testimony borne by an illustrious German scholar to the merits of our English tongue, I will conclude my last with the words of another, not indeed a German, but still of the great Germanic stock; words resuming in themselves much of which we have been speaking upon this and upon former occasions: "As our bodies," he says, "have hidden resources and expedients, to remove the obstacles which the very art of the

* "The Carthaginians shall restore and deliver back all the *renegates* [perfugas] and fugitives that have fled to their side from us."—p. 751.

physician puts in its way, so language, ruled by an indomitable inward principle, triumphs in some degree over the folly of grammarians. Look at the English, polluted by Danish and Norman conquests, distorted in its genuine and noble features by old and recent endeavours to mould it after the French fashion, invaded by a hostile entrance of Greek and Latin words, threatening by increasing hosts to overwhelm the indigenous terms. In these long contests against the combined power of so many forcible enemies, the language, it is true, has lost some of its power of inversion in the structure of sentences, the means of denoting the difference of gender, and the nice distinctions by inflection and termination—almost every word is attacked by the spasm of the accent and the drawing of consonants to wrong positions; yet the old English principle is not overpowered. Trampled down by the ignoble feet of strangers, its springs still retain force enough to restore itself. It lives and plays through all the veins of the language; it impregnates the innumerable strangers entering its dominions with its temper, and stains them with its colour, not unlike the Greek which in taking up oriental words, stripped them of their foreign costume, and bid them to appear as native Greeks."*

* Halbertsma, quoted by Bosworth, *Origin of the English and Germanic Languages*, p. 39.

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